BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Governance, Audit, & Compliance Committee Meeting Agenda

September 18, 2025
1:00 PM – 2:15 PM

Florida Polytechnic University
VIRTUAL VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Dial in: 1-863-225-2351 | Conference ID: 330 103 832#

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Ilya Shapiro, Chair   Dr. Sidney Theis, Vice Chair   Patrick Hagen
Jesse Panuccio

MEETING AGENDA

I.	Call to Order	Ilya Shapiro, Chair
II.	Roll Call	Sherri Pavlik, Executive Assistant & Paralegal
III.	Public Comment	Ilya Shapiro
IV.	Approval of the May 28, 2025, Meeting Minutes *Action Required*	Ilya Shapiro
V.	Approval of the Revised 2024-2026 Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee Charter *Action Required*	Ilya Shapiro
VI.	2024-2026 Finance & Facilities Committee Work Plan Review	Ilya Shapiro
VII.	Audit and Compliance	David Blanton, CAE and CCO

    A.   Audit and Compliance Update

    B.   UAC Annual Report FY25

    C.   UAC Audit Risk Assessment and Audit Plan FY26
       Action Required

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D. [UAC Compliance and Ethics Program Plan FY26](#)
    Action Required

E. [Performance-Based Funding (PBF) Audit Scope and Objectives FY25](#)
    Action Required

VIII.   Governance

A. [Evaluation Instrument for President's Annual Review](#)   David Fugett, Vice
    Action Required   President and General
                                                                    Counsel

B. [Employment Practices Report](#)   Dr. Devin Stephenson,
                                                                    President

IX.   [President's Accomplishments FYE25](#)   Dr. Devin Stephenson

X.   Closing Remarks and Adjournment   Ilya Shapiro

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee
DRAFT Meeting Minutes

May 28, 2025
10:30 A – 12:00 P

Florida Polytechnic University
Virtual via Microsoft Teams

I. <u>Call to Order</u>

Committee Chair Cliff Otto called the Governance, Audit, & Compliance Committee meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

II. <u>Roll Call</u>

Sherri Pavlik called the roll: Committee Chair Cliff Otto, Committee Vice Chair Jesse Panuccio, Trustee Patrick Hagen, and Trustee Sidney Theis were present (Quorum).

Committee members not present: Trustee Dorian Abbot

Other Trustees Present: Trustee Edwar Romero, Trustee Ilya Shapiro, and Trustee Colby Manrodt

Staff Present: President Devin Stephenson, David Blanton, Provost Brad Thiessen, Bryan Brooks, Dr. Allen Bottorff, Melaine Schmiz, Sherri Pavlik, and Kristen Wharton

III. <u>Public Comment</u>

There were no requests received for public comment.

IV. <u>Approval of the February 5, 2025, Minutes</u>

Trustee Patrick Hagen made a motion to approve the Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee meeting minutes for February 5, 2025. Trustee Jesse Panuccio seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

V. <u>2024-2026 Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee Work Plan</u>

Committee Chair Otto reviewed the Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee Work Plan. There was no discussion on this item.

VI.   Audit and Compliance

   A.   Audit and Compliance Update

   David Blanton, CAE and CCO, provided the Committee with an update on audit and
   compliance related matters. Included in the update was a reminder to file the annual Form 1
   with the Florida Commission on Ethics by July 1. Blanton also covered common errors found
   in completing Form 1. If anyone has questions on properly completing Form 1, please contact
   Blanton or the General Counsel's office.

   B.   University Financial Audit FYE 24

   Blanton presented the financial audit of the University for FYE24. The audit had a clean opinion
   on the financial statements and no matters over internal control or compliance that were
   reported.

   C.   Foundation 990

   Blanton presented the Foundation 990 as required by BOG Regulation and ensured trustees
   that the activities of the DSO are consistent with University expectations.

   D.   Contractual Services Payments Review

   Blanton presented a review of contractual service payments that disclosed several areas in
   which the University could enhance controls over such payments. University Audit is planning
   a follow-up review to ensure that controls are adequately addressed for such payments.

   E.   Textbook Affordability Monitoring Report, Spring 2025

   Blanton presented the results of a monitoring review over textbook affordability and
   transparency for the Spring 2025 term. The results of the monitoring review disclosed that
   continued improvements are needed in the archived listing of instructional materials
   maintained by the University and in the required posting of course syllabi for general
   education courses.

   F.   Foreign Influence Audit

   Blanton presented the results of the Foreign Influence Audit. The audit concluded that the
   University is currently exempt from statutory requirements related to screening and travel
   monitoring; however, several recommendations were made since the University will lose this
   exemption upon reaching $10M in budgeted research expenses.

   G.   Report on Cybersecurity & GLBA Compliance

   Cole Allen, Interim CIO of Information Technology Services, Carrie Mann, Director of
   Financial Aid, and Andrew Konapelsky, University Registrar, presented a report on GLBA
   compliance. Annual reporting to the Board is necessary to administer Title IV aid and the
   report concluded that the University has the proper controls in place to safeguard student's
   records, as required by GLBA.

VII.   Governance

A.   Regulations

Melaine Schmiz, Associate General Counsel, provided an overview of amended regulation FPU-2.001 Admission to the University and Appeal Process – General. The revision updates required immunizations and medical documentation, to be consistent with other SUS institutions.

Trustee Ilya Shapiro inquired as to the addition of MMR. Discussion among Committee members occurred, and they agreed to remove Section 9(b).

Committee Vice-Chair Jesse Panuccio made a motion to amend proposed Regulation 2.001 Admission to the University and Appeal Process – General by removing Section 9(b), and to recommend the approval of the amended regulation to the Board of Trustees. Trustee Sidney Theis seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Schmiz then provided an overview of FPU-4.003 Special Fees, Fines and Charges. If approved, this amended regulation will specify library fees and fines. Additionally, language for the authority for the University to enforce these fees is added, as well as to clarify the "cost" definition.

Committee Vice-Chair Jesse Panuccio made a motion to recommend to the Board of Trustees the approval of amended regulation FPU-4.003 Special Fees, Fines and Charges. Trustee Sidney Theis seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

B.   Revised Board of Trustees Bylaws

Schmiz stated that this request is to modify the start date of the Board officer's term in *Section 4.2, Selection of Officers and Terms of Office* from August 1 to July 1 to align with the Fiscal Year.

Committee Vice-Chair Jesse Panuccio made a motion to recommend adoption of the Sixth Amended and Restated Bylaws to the Board of Trustees. Trustee Sidney Theis seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

C.   Board Training Needs

Committee Chair Otto presented a list of training topics beneficial to the Board for consideration. After some discussion, the trustees recommended a total of five topics to Board staff.

D.   President's Proposed Goals for FY26

President Stephenson presented his Administrative Action Plan – FY26 to the Committee. His plan is related to three Priorities of the 25/30 Strategic Plan:

1.   Comprehensive Institutional Growth
2.   Advancement Through International Resource Development

3. Academic and Industry Collaborative Partnerships

President Stephenson will use Qualitative Measures with the continuation of focusing on the quality of processes, satisfaction of stakeholders and overall impact (ROI) of initiatives. Qualitative measures will include:

- Employee and stakeholder feedback through conversations and Board of Trustees' meeting presentations of the Strategic Plan's progress and challenges throughout the academic year;
- Surveys, focus groups, and progress reports that highlight significant achievements and improvements; and
- Information personnel feedback will continue to determine improvements in organizational culture and climate.

He will also use Quantitative Measures by rigorously tracking progress through quantitative data, providing clear and objective benchmarks for performance. Quantitative measures will include:

- Key performances indicators (KPI's) for each of our newly created Strategic Plan Goals;
- Student success, as measured by achievement, persistence, and completion;
- Financial performance metrics such as budget adherence and cost savings; and
- Productivity and efficiency metrics across academic, business, and student-focused departments.

Trustee Sidney Theis made a motion to recommend to the Board of Trustees approval of the President's FY26 Administrative Action Plan. Trustee Patrick Hagen seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

With no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 12:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:
Sherri Pavlik
Executive Assistant & Paralegal
Office of General Counsel

Florida Polytechnic University

Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee

Board of Trustees

September 18, 2025

Subject: **Approval of the Revised 2024-26 Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee Charter**

## Proposed Committee Action

Recommend approval of the revised Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee Charter to the Board of Trustees.

Background Information

As the Board has reorganized its standing committees, each committee's charter is being reviewed. The Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee Charter has been reviewed by the Committee Chair, and Committee staff liaisons, David Fugett, VP and General Counsel and David Blanton, CAE/CCO.

Supporting Documentation: DRAFT Revised 2024-2026 Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee Charter

Prepared by: David Fugett, Vice President and General Counsel; David Blanton, CAE/CCO; Kristen Wharton, Corporate Secretary to the Board of Trustees
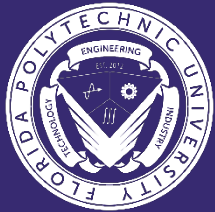
SUMMARY CHARTER STATEMENT

I.   Purpose

The Governance, Audit and Compliance Committee is a standing committee of the Board of Trustees responsible for reviewing and making recommendations to the Board on various Board functions, including periodically reviewing the Board's Bylaws; evaluating the Board's performance; initiating Board training; facilitating nominations related to the Board Chair and Vice-Chair elections; reviewing proposed changes to University regulations and policies which are not reviewed by another Board committee; and overseeing presidential personnel matters, (which includes the annual evaluation and making recommendations related to the President's compensation adjustments and annual goals). The Committee also acts as the plan administrator of the Florida Polytechnic University retirement plan created for the President.

Additionally, the Committee monitors the overall organizational tone for quality financial reporting, sound business risk practices, compliance with applicable laws and regulations, policies, and ethical behavior. The Committee receives and reviews both internal and external auditors' reports ensuring that timely and appropriate corrective actions have been taken. The Committee also approves the audit and compliance plans for University Audit and Compliance and monitors the progress of each plan.

For a more detailed Audit and Compliance Charter, please see separate documentation on the Governance, Audit and Compliance Committee's webpage.

II.   Composition and Meetings

A.   The Committee shall consist of at least three Trustees, appointed by the Board Chair.
B.   The Committee shall meet at least quarterly, or more frequently as determined by the Committee Chair.
C.   The Vice President and General Counsel, and the Chief Compliance Officer/Chief Audit Executive shall serve as the University staff liaisons to the Committee and attend meetings to provide updates and analysis.
D.   The Committee may invite other University personnel or external experts to participate as needed.

III.   Reporting

A.   The Committee shall report regularly to the full Board of Trustees.
B.   The Committee shall collaborate with other standing committees when initiatives span multiple areas of governance.

IV.   Charter Review

This Charter shall be reviewed biennially by the Committee. Recommended changes shall be submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval.

Florida Polytechnic University

Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee

Board of Trustees

September 18, 2025

Subject: 2024-2026 Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee Work Plan

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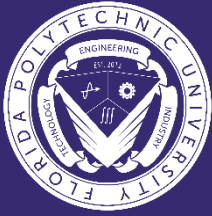**Proposed Committee Action**

No action is required unless changes are requested.

Background Information

Committee Chair Ilya Shapiro will review the Committee's 2024-2026 Committee Work Plan.

Supporting Documentation: Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee Work Plan 2024-2026

Prepared by: David Fugett, Vice President and General Counsel

Committee Work Plan

Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee Work Plan
2024-2026

SEPTEMBER

- Review Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee Charter (review every two years – due September 2026)

Governance:
- Make recommendation on the trustee evaluation instrument to be used for President's annual review
- Review President's Outcome Metrics (for prior FY)
- Review President's Powers and Duties (if needed)
- Employment Practices Report

Audit and Compliance:
- University Operational Audit – Auditor General *(minimum every three years)*
- UAC Annual Report *(prior FY)*
- UAC Risk Assessment and Audit Plan *(current FY)*
- University Compliance and Ethics Program Plan *(current FY)*
- Performance Based Funding Audit Scope Approval
- Audit and Compliance Charter Reviews *(every three years – due 2026)*

NOVEMBER

Governance:
- Make recommendations to the Board on President's evaluation outcome and compensation changes
- Make recommendation to Board on renewal of President's employment agreement and any necessary changes to the agreement *(due 2026)*

Audit and Compliance:
- Textbook Affordability Monitoring Report *(Fall semester)*
- Foundation Financial Audit *(Prior FY)*

FEBRUARY

Governance:
- Review Board Bylaws (review every 3 years – due 2027)
- Discuss nominations for Board Chair and Vice Chair (every 2 years - due February 2026)
- Oversee Board self-assessment (every 5 years – due February 2028)
- Employment Practices Report

Audit and Compliance:
- Performance Based Funding Audit and Data Integrity Certification
- University Annual Financial Audit *(prior FY)*
- Foundation 990 Financial Audit *(prior FY)*

JUNE

Governance:
- Make recommendation to Board on President's proposed goals for FY+1
- Discuss Board training needs
- Make recommendation on nominations for Board Chair and Vice Chair (every two years – due May 2026)

Audit and Compliance:
- Textbook Affordability Monitoring Report *(Spring semester)*
- Bright Futures Audit *(review and approve every two years – due June 2026)*

The Finance and Facilities Committee adopted the 2024-2026 Finance and Facilities Work Plan on September 6, 2024.

Florida Polytechnic University

Governance, Audit and Compliance Committee

Board of Trustees

September 18, 2025

Subject: Audit & Compliance Update

Proposed Committee Action

Information only – no action required.

Background Information

David Blanton, Chief Audit Executive/Chief Compliance Officer (CAE/CCO) will provide the Committee with an update of all University audit and compliance activity including the status of all external audits and University Audit & Compliance activities and plans.

Supporting Documentation: None

Prepared by: David A. Blanton, CAE/CCO

Florida Polytechnic University

Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee

Board of Trustees

September 18, 2025

Subject: **UAC Annual Report FYE25**

Proposed Committee Action
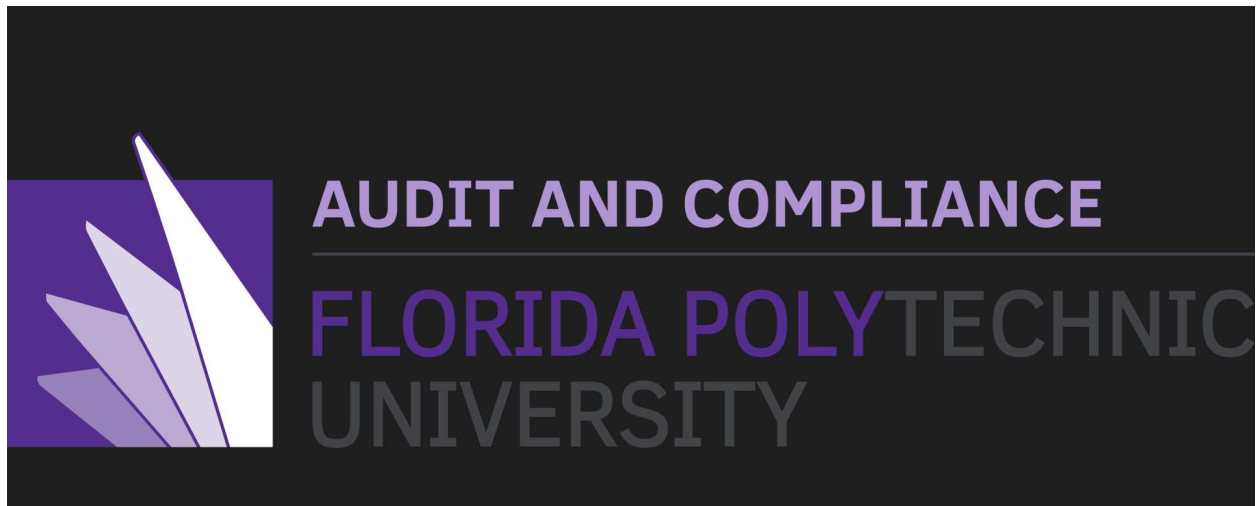
Information only. No action required.

Background Information

Board of Governors Regulation 4.002 requires that an annual report be prepared summarizing the Activities of University Audit for the preceding year. Similarly, BOG Regulation 4.003 provides that the chief compliance officer shall report at least annually on the effectiveness of the compliance and ethics program. This annual report reflects the activity for University Audit and Compliance for FYE25.

The Audit and Compliance Committee should utilize the information presented in this report to review the operations of University Audit & Compliance (UAC) and to fulfill their oversight responsibility with respect to the audit and compliance functions at the University.

Supporting Documentation: UAC Annual Report – FYE25 (Report No. FPU 2026-01)

Prepared by: David A. Blanton, CAE/CCO

AUDIT AND COMPLIANCE

FLORIDA POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-25 FISCAL YEAR

Report No: FPU 2026-01

July 2025

In accordance with Board of Governors Regulations 4.002, 4.003, and Internal Auditing Standards, this report is presented to summarize the activities of University Audit and Compliance for the 2024-25 fiscal year.

FLORIDA POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY AUDIT & COMPLIANCE
ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

Message from the Chief Audit Executive and Chief Compliance Officer

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Board of Governors (BOG) Regulations[1] require that an annual report be prepared summarizing the activities of University Audit for the preceding year and that the chief compliance officer shall report at least annually on the effectiveness of the compliance and ethics program. This report is prepared in response to those BOG Regulations and summarizes both audit and compliance activity for the reporting period July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025 (FYE25). Additionally, this report facilitates the proper oversight of both functions by the Audit and Compliance Committee.

The following accomplishments highlight the activity of University Audit and Compliance (UAC) during the reporting period:

- Completed and released six audit efforts/reports:
  - Report FPU 2025-01: Annual Report (FYE24)
  - Report FPU 2025-02: Risk Assessment and Work Plan (FYE25)
  - Report FPU 2025-04: Foundation Controls Follow-up Review
  - Report FPU 2025-06: Performance Based Funding Data Integrity Audit (2024)
  - Report FPU 2025-07: Contractual Services Payments Review
  - Report FPU 2025-09: Foreign Influence Audit
- Completed and released three compliance reports and/or planned projects:
  - Report FPU 2025-03: Compliance Program Plan (FYE25)
  - Report FPU 2025-05: Textbook Affordability (Fall 2024)
  - Report FPU 2025-08: Textbook Affordability (Spring 2025)
- Administered and disposed of 7 allegations or complaints reported to UAC via the hotline.
- Assisted with various consulting activities to enhance university operations.
- Obtained relevant educational training for both audit and compliance, as required.

This was the fifth year that Florida Poly was subject to the auditing and certification requirements related to Performance Based Funding (PBF). BOG Regulations require that this audit be completed and submitted to the BOG by March 1 of each year and such assurances are necessary for Florida Poly to secure PBF funding. UAC was able to complete and submit the required audit on time. Additionally, the audit of Foreign Influence was completed and submitted prior to July 1, 2025, as required. UAC also completed audit projects related to Foundation Internal Controls and a review of Contractual Service Payments that both yielded several recommendations for enhanced controls.

In addition to completing the PBF data integrity audit, UAC was able to complete monitoring efforts over textbook affordability for two different terms and assisted on various other consultative matters during

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[1] Board of Governors Regulations 4.002 (State University System Chief Audit Executives) and 4.003 (State University System Compliance and Ethics Programs).

the year. Looking forward to FYE26, UAC will again be principally driven by certain external requirements (e.g. performance-based funding audit and follow-up on various external audits) but should have more flexibility to incorporate risk-based areas of concern into the audit plan.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to serve the University and the Board of Trustees and for their continued support of the audit and compliance functions. If you have any questions or need further information, please feel free to call me at (863) 874-8441.

David A. Blanton, CPA, CCEP
Chief Audit Executive and Chief Compliance Officer

Purpose and Mission

The mission of University Audit and Compliance (UAC) is to serve the University by recommending actions to assist them in achieving its strategic and operational objectives. This assistance includes providing recommendations to management of activities designed and implemented by management to strengthen internal controls, reduce risk to and waste of resources, and improve operations to enhance the performance and reputation of the University. In addition, UAC assists the Audit and Compliance Committee (AACC) in accomplishing their oversight responsibilities in accordance with Board of Governors guidelines and regulations.

Purpose of Internal Auditing

According to the Institute of Internal Auditors' (IIA) Global Internal Audit Standards:

Internal auditing strengthens the organization's ability to create, protect, and sustain value by providing the board and management with independent, risk-based, and objective assurance, advice, insight and foresight. Internal auditing enhances the organization's:

- Successful achievement of its objectives.
- Governance, risk management, and control processes.
- Decision-making and oversight.
- Reputation and credibility with its stakeholders.
- Ability to serve the public interest.

The IIA has issued revised standards and guidance over internal audit operations. These Standards were effective beginning in 2025 and are currently being evaluated by UAC to ensure conformance.

Governance and Charters

The Board of Governors (BOG) promulgated Regulations 4.001: *University System Processes for Complaints of Waste, Fraud, or Financial Mismanagement,* 4.002: *State University System Chief Audit Executives*, and 4.003: *State University System Compliance and Ethics Programs*. In response to these BOG Regulations, the University structured and approved the following Florida Poly Charters:

- **Board of Trustees Audit and Compliance Committee (AACC) Charter**. The AACC Charter was adopted to provide for the various oversight responsibilities charged to the AACC.

- **Internal Audit Charter**. The Internal Audit Charter effectively establishes the position of Chief Audit Executive (CAE) and outlines the duties and responsibilities of the position.

- **Compliance and Ethics Charter**. The Compliance and Ethics Charter effectively establishes the Compliance function at the University and outlines the duties and responsibilities of the position, including the development of the University's Compliance and Ethics Program.

All three charters are required to be reviewed and approved for consistency with Board of Governors and university regulations, professional standards, and industry practices at least every three years. All three charters were last presented to the AACC for review and approval in September 2023 and will be presented for review and approval in 2026. All charters are available on the University's website under Board of Trustees/Committees/Governance, Audit & Compliance.

Internal Audit Activity (Audits, Reviews, and Consulting Activities)

The following summarizes the activity of the internal audit function for the period of July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025:

- **UAC Annual Report – FYE24**. This report was prepared and presented to summarize the activities of University Audit and Compliance for the 2023-24 fiscal year. (Report FPU 2025-01)

- **Risk Assessment and Audit Plan**. Each year, the CAE prepares a Risk Assessment and Audit Plan that is presented to the AACC for approval. (Report FPU 2025-02)

- **Foundation Controls Follow-up Review**. This review focused primarily on internal control deficiencies cited in recent external audit reports of the Foundation. The review resulted in certain recommendations to enhance controls over Foundation financial operations. Additionally, a consultative memo was issued to management prescribing additional recommendations. (Report FPU 2025-04)

- **Performance Based Funding Data Integrity Audit**. This audit was performed to determine whether the University has established appropriate controls to ensure the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of data submissions to the BOG which supports the PBF metrics of the University as of September 30, 2024. The audit resulted in no reportable matters. (Report FPU 2025-06)

- **Contractual Services Payments Review**: This limited scope review was initiated because of recent legislative interest in such payments and due to certain concerns over specific contracts that were reported to UAC. Consequently, the review was focused on contracts initiated during FYE23 and FYE24. The review resulted in several recommendations to enhance controls over contractual

service payments. UAC is planning to conduct a follow-up review in FYE26 to ensure appropriate corrective action was taken. (Report FPU 2025-07)

- **Foreign Influence Audit**: This audit focused on screening requirements and foreign travel monitoring requirements and was statutorily required to be completed and submitted by July 1, 2025. Although the university is currently exempt from the foreign influence law (less than $10M in budgeted research expenses) several recommendations were made by UAC to ensure compliance with the law upon loss of the exemption. (Report FPU 2025-09)

AUDIT PLAN PROGRESS & RESOURCE UTILIZATION

Table 1 below provides a measure of actual progress against the BOT-approved audit work plan for FYE25:

Table 1 Audit Plan – FYE25 Actual Progress vs. Approved Audit Plan			
#	**Planned Audits/Risk**	**Area of Focus (i.e. processes/Controls)**	**Status**
1	UAC Annual Report	To summarize the activities of University Audit for the year.	☑
2	UAC Risk Assessment & Audit Plan	To evaluate risk across the University and allocate audit resources to areas of risk that might benefit from audit assurance.	☑
3	PBF Data Integrity Audit	To determine whether the University has established adequate controls to properly report on the various metrics related to PBF. Follow-up of prior PBF audit observations.	☑
4.	Foundation Follow-up	To determine whether controls have been properly implemented to adequately correct the segregation of duties finding in the Crowe "Review of Internal Controls for University Direct Support Organizations".	☑
5.	IT Audit Follow-up	To determine whether controls have been properly implemented to adequately correct the IT security findings included in the Auditor General's "Information Technology Operational Audit".	X (A)
6.	Asset Accountability	To determine whether appropriate controls exist to adequately account for University capital asset acquisitions (for both capitalized assets and highly desirable assets under the capitalization threshold).	X
7.	Contractual Services Review	To determine whether appropriate controls exist over payments associated with contractual services.	☑ (B)
☑	Planned audit or review completed.		
X	Planned audit or review not completed.		
(A)	In progress. Carried into FYE25 audit plan.		
(B)	Review not included on audit plan. This project was added due to recent legislative concerns and as a result of concerns over certain contracts that were reported to UAC. Project scope was extended to a broader population of contractual service agreements from FY23 and FY24.		

Given the limited resources of UAC, and the amount of time necessary to effectively perform the responsibilities of both the audit and compliance functions at the University, mandated audits were prioritized. As noted above in Table 1, apart from the annual report and audit plan, two audit focus areas were completed from the prior plan year (PBF audit). Most other UAC resources were reallocated to the compliance function and investigations which are detailed in Table 5 of this report.

TABLE 2
COMPARISON OF APPROVED PLAN HOURS TO ACTUAL HOURS – FYE25

Activity	Plan Hours	Actual Hours	Difference	% Difference
Administrative	220	145	(75)	-34.1%
Audit	932	867	(65)	-7.0%
Compliance	320	337	17	5.3%
Investigative	120	105	(15)	-12.5%
Consulting	144	137.5	(6.5)	-4.5%
Training	120	144	24	20.0%
Totals	1,856	1,789.5	(66.5)[2]	-6.5%

As reflected in Table 2 above, UAC's time for administrative time and audit efforts were significantly less than planned. These variances are attributable to greater efficiencies on the PBF audit, assistance from OGC in the preparation for Board meetings, and a reduction in operational meetings attended by UAC. The variance in training effort was primarily due to attending more State-wide SUS meetings for audit, compliance, foreign influence, and Information Technology audits groups.

TABLE 3
COMPARISON OF ACTUAL HOURS – CURRENT AND PRIOR PERIODS

| Activity	FYE23	FYE24	FYE25	Difference	% Difference
Administrative	235	202	145	(57)	-28.2%
Audit	715	554	867	313	56.5%
Compliance	577.5	523.5	337	(186.5)	-35.6%
Investigative	45.5	292	105	(187)	-64.0%
Consulting	149.5	96	137.5	41.5	43.2%
Training	118.5	122	144	22	18.0%
Totals	1,841	1,789.5	1,789.5	(54)	-3.0%

As reflected in Table 3, the most significant variances from year-to-year were increases in audit and consulting, that were offset with reductions in compliance, investigations, and administrative time. As

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[2] Differences in total planned versus total actual hours is primarily the result of more personal time off than planned (10 hours) and closures due to Hurricanes Helene and Milton (56 hours) resulting in less direct time charged to audit and compliance activities.

noted from the introduction to this annual report, audit reports were completed for the PBF audit, Foreign Influence, Foundation Controls Follow-up, and a Contractual Service Payments Review.

The following graph depicts actual hours by activity for the 2024-25 fiscal year:
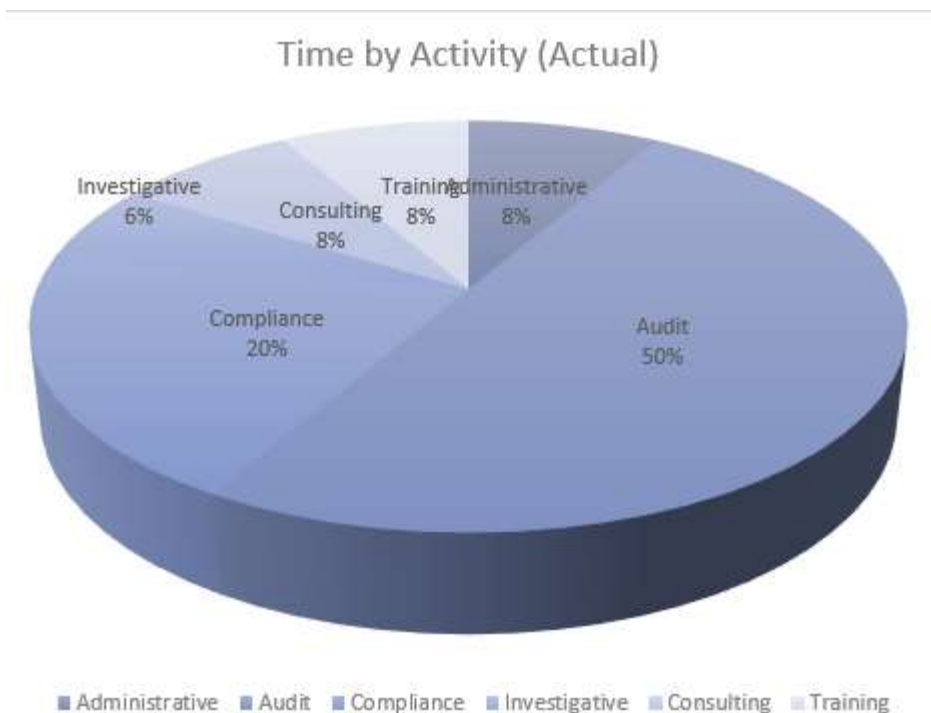
Other Mandatory Disclosures – Audit and Compliance

UAC adheres to the Code of Ethics and the *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing* (*Standards*) adopted by the Institute of Internal Auditors. Those *Standards* and University Audit's Charter require certain other annual disclosures as follows:

- Organizational Independence: The Internal Audit Charter effectively establishes the position of Chief Audit Executive (CAE) and provides for a dual-reporting relationship of the CAE to promote independence and objectivity. In this dual-reporting relationship, the CAE reports functionally to the AACC and administratively to the President. In addition, to further promote independence the Charter specifies that the CAE is not authorized to perform any operational duties, initiate or approve accounting transactions or the selection of vendors, or direct the activities of any University employee.

- Impairments to Independence or Objectivity: Independence is the freedom from conditions that threaten the ability of the internal audit activity to carry out internal audit responsibilities in an unbiased manner. Objectivity is an unbiased mental attitude that allows internal auditors to perform engagements in such a manner that they believe in their work product and that no quality

compromises are made. During the reporting period, there were no impairments to the independence or objectivity of UAC.

- <u>Disclosure of Nonconformance</u>: When nonconformance with the *Standards* impacts the overall scope or operation of the internal audit activity, such matters must be disclosed to senior management and the board. During the reporting period, there were no such instances of nonconformance with the *Standards*.

- <u>Management's Response to Unacceptable Risks</u>: When the CAE concludes that management has accepted a level of risk that may be unacceptable to the university, the CAE must discuss the matter with senior management. If the CAE determines that the matter has not been resolved, the CAE must communicate the matter to the Board. For the audit period, no such matters were noted or required to be reported to senior management or the Board.

- <u>Quality Assurance and Review (QAR) Program</u>: A QAR program is designed to enable an evaluation of the internal audit activity's conformance with the *Standards* and an evaluation of whether internal auditors apply the Code of Ethics. The *Standards* require ongoing internal reviews as well as an external QAR. An external QAR is required to be conducted every five years. The University's first-ever QAR was completed in September 2022 and resulted in conformance at the highest level with IIA Standards and the IIA's Code of Conduct. The next external QAR is required to be completed by September 2027 and will be evaluated using the revised IIA Global Internal Audit Standards. An interim self-assessment is planned for FYE26.

- <u>Restrictions or Barriers to Information:</u> The University Audit Charter requires that the Chair of the Audit and Compliance Committee is to be notified of any unresolved restriction, barrier, or limitation to obtaining necessary information to perform UAC's duties. No such restrictions or barriers have been encountered by UAC.

Compliance & Ethics Program Activity

BOG Regulation 4.003, *State University System Compliance and Ethics Programs (CEP)* requires each university to establish a CEP and complete an external review of the CEP's design and effectiveness and identify any recommendations for improvement, as appropriate. In June 2022, the final report for the review of Florida Poly's CEP was completed and issued in accordance with BOG Regulation 4.003. The review was completed by an external assessment team utilizing criteria established by the SUS Compliance Consortium to evaluate the CEP's conformance with BOG requirements and Federal Sentencing Guidelines for an effective CEP. The results of the external review disclosed general conformance with each of the 16 areas considered.

The following summarizes the activity of the Compliance function for FYE25:

- **Compliance and Ethics Program Plan**. Each year, the CCO prepares a Compliance & Ethics Program Plan (Plan) that is presented to the AACC for approval. The 2024-25 Plan was presented to and approved by the AACC in September 2024. Table 5 below provides a measure of actual progress against the BOT-approved Plan for FYE25:

#	Planned Area of Focus	Status/Comments
	Table 5 **Compliance & Ethics Program Plan – FYE25** **Actual Progress vs. Approved Plan**	
1	General Compliance Activities/Investigations	☑
2	Trainings & Communication	☑
3	Textbook Affordability Monitoring Review (Fall 2024)	☑
4	Textbook Affordability Monitoring Review (Spring 2025)	☑
5	Consult: Foreign Influence Reporting	Ongoing (A)
6	Consult: Fraud Awareness	X - In-progress (B)
☑	Planned area of focus in progress or completed.	
X	Planned audit or review not completed in Plan year.	
(A)	UAC assisted on a consultative basis rather than performing monitoring. Required audit in FYE25.	
(B)	UAC working with the newly established Director of Risk Management to address this area.	

University Compliance has given thought as to how it can be more effective with respect to providing coverage for planned areas of focus and has determined that greater efficiencies would be achieved by issuing Compliance Monitoring Reports for each of the planned focus areas approved by the AACC. These reports provide slightly less assurance than an audit report but allow UAC to provide greater coverage of selected areas of risk. Additionally, ongoing monitoring of various transactions is performed by UAC to identify potential areas of concern or noncompliance.

- **Compliance and Ethics Hotline**. The "Compliance and Ethics Hotline" was established to report suspected or actual instances of noncompliance, fraud, waste, or abuse directly to the CAE/CCO. The Hotline provides various methods of reporting including an on-line form, telephone, fax, or direct mailing to a local post office box for completely anonymous reporting. These reporting mechanisms are publicized on the university website and promoted in trainings conducted by UAC.

- **Board Trainings/Orientations**. The CCO participates in individual orientation sessions for new Trustees to familiarize them with the duties and responsibilities of the audit and compliance functions at the university.

- **Allegations and Investigations**. Allegations are reported to UAC through the Compliance and Ethics Hotline, written correspondence (letters and email), telephone calls, referrals from the Board of Governors Inspector General, referrals from the Chief Inspector General from the State's Executive Office of the Governor (EOG), and other sources. During the reporting period, UAC received 8 allegations, complaints, or concerns from which no investigative reports were issued by UAC. One allegation was outsourced to an outside investigator and the final report was released in FYE25. Another allegation resulted in a broader review of Contractual Service Payments. (Report FPU 2025-07) All other matters were referred to management for corrective action and/or did not warrant further investigative effort.

Allegations can be classified and analyzed for patterns of behavior to determine whether UAC needs to commit future resources in order prevent or correct recurring concerns. For instance, certain matters can be potentially remediated with either additional training or an in-depth audit designed to address such concerns. Based on an analysis of the reported nature of allegations for FYE25, no particular area rises to the level of high risk warranting such remedial efforts. However, control deficiencies cited in the review over contractual service payments were discussed with the Office of General Counsel and the University Controller for remediation.

Consulting and Advisory Activity

UAC provides consulting and advisory services which are intended to provide advice and guidance on a wide variety of topics related to compliance, internal controls, reporting, and business practices. This includes reviewing current practices, researching and interpreting policies and procedures, and responding to routine inquiries. UAC also serves as a liaison with external auditors. During the reporting period, UAC assisted with the following consultative projects:

- Internal controls/compliance/best practices
- Review of the Annual Financial Report
- Fraud prevention and detection
- Foreign Influence Controls and Reporting
- Foundation Internal Controls
- Compliance with New Legislative Changes
- Florida DOGE Task Force Responses

- Statement of Financial Interests (FCOE Form 1) Reporting & Comon Errors
- Miscellaneous advisory services on a variety of other topics

During the current reporting period, UAC responded to a total of 49 consulting and/or advisory requests that accounted for approximately 8 percent of UAC's resources.

Professional Development and Certifications

UAC maintains active memberships and attends training and continuing professional education seminars from the following professional organizations:

- Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA)
- Association of College and University Auditors (ACUA)
- Society of Corporate Compliance and Ethics (SCCE)
- American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA)
- State University Audit Council (SUAC)
- SUS Compliance Consortium

UAC meets regularly with other State University System CAE's in SUAC and CCO's in the Compliance Consortium to discuss emerging issues and exchange knowledge for best practices related to audit and compliance. Both groups continued to hold periodic virtual meetings to discuss common relevant issues, best practices, and trends in audit and compliance. Additionally, both groups met in person during FYE25.

As noted in Table 3, the CAE/CCO's activities included 144 hours for training, which translated into 75.8 continuing professional educational (CPE) hours and/or CEU credits. Certain trainings (e.g. SUAC and the Consortium) and all travel to and from trainings are charged as training hours; however, they do not qualify for CPE/CEU credits. Training obtained during the fiscal year met the requirements set forth by the Institute of Internal Auditors, the AICPA, the University Audit Charter, the Society for Corporate Compliance and Ethics, and the University Compliance Charter.

The CAE/CCO is licensed as a Florida Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and a Certified Compliance & Ethics Professional (CCEP)®. A CCEP designation is awarded to someone with knowledge of relevant regulations and expertise in compliance processes sufficient to assist organizations with their legal obligations, and someone who promotes organizational integrity through the operation of effective compliance programs. Both professional certifications require a certain amount of professional development to maintain licensure.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) – Audit & Compliance

Key Performance Indicator	FYE20	FYE21	FYE22	FYE23	FYE24	FYE25	Comments
Total reports released	8	9	9	8	7	9	
Number of audits/reviews completed	2	1	2	2	1	4	
Percentage of audit effort	27.7%	31.6%	42.4%	38.8%	31.0%	50.0%	
Compliance Monitoring Reports Issued	0	3	4	3	3	2	
Number of allegations addressed	18	2	9	6	8	8	
Number of investigative reports released	4	0	0	0	0	1	One outsourced investigation
Number of consults/compliance inquiries	138	80	82	64	38	49	
Number of certifications held by UAC staff	2	2	2	2	2	2	CPA, CCEP
Training sessions conducted by UAC	4	1	0	0	0	0	Other than BOT orientations
Audit experience (years)	30	31	32	33	34	35	
Compliance professional experience (years)	2	3	4	5	6	7	

KPI's are incorporated into this annual report for both audit and compliance to facilitate better AACC oversight. UAC welcomes the addition of any additional suggested metrics.

Compliance Message

Compliance and ethics begins with you because of the difference your decisions can make. When a concern is identified by anyone, it is important that the university is able to respond to the matter and correct the issue. Your choice to report the matter (or to do nothing) will have a significant impact on the university – and this is just one way that compliance and ethics begins with you.

UNIVERSITY AUDIT & COMPLIANCE
HOTLINE REPORTING OPTIONS:

EMAIL: dblanton@floridapoly.edu
FAX: 863.874.8509
PHONE: 863.874.8441
MAIL: PO BOX 1808/EATON PARK FL/33840*
WEBSITE REPORTING FORM: SEE UAC WEBPAGE
IN PERSON: LTB 1146 at POLY SOUTH

*This option allows for complete anonymity in reporting any concern. (For all other options, UAC will attempt to maintain anonymity to the extent possible).

Florida Polytechnic University

Governance, Audit and Compliance Committee

Board of Trustees

September 18, 2025

Subject: **UAC Risk Assessment and Audit Plan FYE26**

Proposed Committee Action

Recommend approval of the University Audit Risk Assessment, Audit Plan for FYE26, and UAC Strategic Plan to the Board of Trustees.

Background Information

As required by the Internal Audit Charter, Florida Board of Governors Regulations, and Internal Auditing Standards, audits are to be scheduled and performed according to a risk-based annual plan which shall be submitted to the President, the Audit & Compliance Committee (AACC), and the Board of Governors. The goal of the Plan is to effectively use audit resources and provide audit coverage to areas with the greatest known risks and to dedicate sufficient time in administering the Compliance and Ethics Program.

The Plan should be reviewed by the Committee to ensure it is consistent with expectations for University Audit with respect to risk, planned audits, and other activities performed by the audit function. The Plan may be updated, as necessary throughout the year, to reflect changes in the University's strategic plan, program initiatives, and external environment factors along with accommodating requests from the Board of Trustees and University management.

Supporting Documentation: University Audit Risk Assessment and Audit Plan, 2025-26 FY (Report No. 2026-02).

Prepared by: David A. Blanton, CAE/CCO

![Florida Polytechnic University logo]

University Audit
Risk Assessment & Work Plan
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2026
Report No: FPU 2026-02
August 2025

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Transmittal Letter

August 15, 2025

Mr. Ilya Shapiro, Governance, Audit and Compliance Committee (AACC) Chair
Dr. Devin Stephenson, President
Florida Polytechnic University

I am pleased to submit the Annual Work Plan (Plan) of the Florida Polytechnic University Audit function for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026. The Plan primarily provides for the planned activity of University Audit and an allocation of total available time between the audit and compliance functions. A separate Plan for University Compliance has been prepared in greater detail and submitted for approval; however, approved total Compliance Plan hours are also included in this report to account for the total resources of University Audit and Compliance (UAC). This Plan outlines all planned audits and other required audit-related activities based on required audits, an assessment of audit risk, and resources available to UAC during the plan year. The Plan also includes provisions for assisting management with additional requests, special investigations, follow-up on any previous observations/findings, and other value-added work.

The Plan may be updated as necessary to reflect changes in the University's strategic plan, program initiatives, and external environmental factors along with accommodating requests from the Board of Trustees and University management.

Additionally, the Plan also incorporates UAC's efforts at creating a strategic plan for University Audit that is consistent with the University's strategic plan and various other stakeholder expectations, as required by the newly revised Global Internal Audit Standards.

Thank you for your support of University Audit and Compliance.

Sincerely,

David A. Blanton

David A. Blanton, CPA, CCEP
Chief Audit Executive & Chief Compliance Officer
University Audit and Compliance

Overview

The Internal Audit Charter, approved by the Audit and Compliance Committee (AACC), provides that the mission of University Audit is to serve the University by recommending actions to assist them in achieving its strategic and operational objectives. This assistance includes providing recommendations to management for activities designed and implemented by management to strengthen internal controls, reduce risk to and waste of resources, and improve operations to enhance the performance and reputation of the University. Additionally, the Compliance and Ethics Charter provides that the mission of University Compliance is to support and promote a culture of ethics, compliance, risk mitigation, and accountability.

As required by the Internal Audit Charter, pursuant to Florida Board of Governors (BOG) Regulations[1] and Internal Auditing Standards[2], audits are to be scheduled and performed according to a risk-based annual plan which shall be submitted to the President, the AACC, and the Board of Governors. A risk assessment is an on-going systematic exercise performed to identify concerns and potential areas of risk that may benefit from audit assurance and is used to appropriately allocate audit resources. In performing the risk assessment, information on risk areas and concerns were gathered from the following:

- inquiry with various University staff/observations and a review of University records
- the collective knowledge of UAC as it relates to University operations
- a review of other University audit reports
- new legislation, laws, rules, or requirements
- complaints and allegations

A population of 132 risk areas was identified to create the "audit risk universe". This represents an increase of 4 new risks that were added from the previous risk assessment conducted last year. Various risk factors were then analyzed and applied to the audit risk universe to generate a relative risk rating by area/specific risk. University senior management's input was then solicited and obtained in considering significant risks. The results of this risk assessment process led to the generation of selected audit topics as identified on pages 4 and 5 and those risks dedicated to compliance monitoring[3].

Risk Assessment

The CAE should use risk assessment techniques in developing the internal audit activity's plan and in determining priorities for allocating internal audit resources. Risk assessment is used to select areas to include in the internal audit activity's plan. Also, the CAE should seek guidance on what the board and the senior management considers important to assist in assessing risks, prioritizing projects and allocating audit resources.

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[1] Florida Board of Governors Regulation 4.002(6)(d)
[2] *Global Internal Audit Standards*
[3] Planned risks to be monitored through compliance monitoring reviews are detailed in the 2025-26 Compliance & Ethics Program Plan.

Risk Assessment Process

Each year, University Audit and Compliance is charged with completing an assessment of risk to assist in the development of an Annual Audit & Compliance Work Plan (Plan). The goal for the Plan is to effectively use audit resources to provide audit coverage to areas with the greatest known risks and to dedicate sufficient time in administering the Compliance and Ethics Program in accordance with BOG Regulations[4].

A list of risk areas, prepared from inquiry of senior management, reviews of other audit reports, and previous risk assessments was compiled and prioritized with respect to University goals and objectives, the nature and type of risk, and available resources. The areas of risk were assessed and the Work Plan was developed considering the following factors:

1. Impact
2. Likelihood
3. Concern
4. Management's ranking
5. Risk factor classifications (see sidebar at right)
6. Fraud risk

A weighted value was then determined, based on the factors above, for each risk identified. Risks with a higher risk score were prioritized for audit consideration and presented to the Audit and Compliance Committee for Plan approval.

Auditing Standards require that follow-up be performed on previously reported matters. The Plan includes an allocation of resources to perform follow-up reviews to ensure appropriate corrective action has been taken for each previously reported finding/observation. Additionally, certain audits included in the Plan are statutorily required, independent of the risk assessment process.

RISK FACTORS & CONSIDERATIONS

Operational – Are University resources being used in an effective and efficient manner? Could University operations be improved?

Financial – Are University financial processes handled as intended? Are assets maintained and protected in an appropriate manner? Is financial reporting reliable and accurate? Are accounting records properly maintained?

Compliance – Is the department or audited activity in compliance with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and University policies?

Reputational – Does an activity or action rise to the level of concern such that the resulting loss or damage impair the reputation of the University?

Strategic – Does the activity or department's actions align with the strategic plan of the University? (i.e., mission, goals, and objectives)

Technology – Does the processes, applications, and infrastructure that support an activity or department adequately support the technology environment for the University?

Human Capital – Is the University workforce properly suited to meet the objectives of the University?

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[4] Florida Board of Governors Regulation 4.003(1)

Risk Areas

The following areas were determined to present the highest risk using the risk assessment methodology or represent audits or reports that are required to be completed:

Rank	Audit Risk Area	Objectives/Purpose of Audit or Activity	Notes
1	Performance Based Funding (PBF) Data Integrity Audit	As required, to determine whether the University has established adequate controls to properly report data for the various metrics related to PBF.	A
2	Annual Report – FYE25	As required, this report summarizes the audit activities for University Audit and facilitates proper oversight by the AACC.	
3	Risk Assessment & Audit Plan - FYE26	As required, to effectively use audit resources to provide audit coverage to areas with the greatest known risks and other required audit activities.	
4	IT Audit Follow-up	To determine whether controls have been properly implemented to adequately correct the IT security findings included in the Auditor General's "Information Technology Operational Audit".	B
5	Contractual Services Follow-up Review	To determine whether appropriate corrective action has been implemented to address concerns noted over contractual service payments, procurements, and contracts.	
6	Global Internal Audit Standards Review	Self-assessment and gap analysis of changes required by new internal auditing standards.	C
7	Residential Housing Audit	To determine whether controls over the management of residential housing and the related collection and recording of revenues from these resources are properly designed and effective to ensure proper reporting and accounting.	
Notes:			
A – PBF audit and BOT data certification is required to be presented to the BOG by March 1, 2026. This is the sixth year that Florida Poly will participate in the funding for PBF and a condition of participation is an audit of the data integrity supporting the metrics developed to measure performance. Consequently, this is ranked highest priority for the 2025-26 Plan year.			
B – Project was included on FYE25 plan but not completed and carried forward into current plan.			
C - New standards effective 1/1/25. This review essentially serves as an interim quality assurance review.			

Given the limited resources of UAC, and the amount of time necessary to administer both the audit and compliance functions at the University, planned audits were limited to these required audits and areas of high risk. Additionally, audit resources were reserved to complete an annual report, the risk assessment and audit plan, and other administrative duties in the upcoming plan year. If resources for the 2025-26 fiscal year are available beyond activities called for in the Plan above, UAC will present a revised Plan for AACC approval to address additional areas of high risk.

Additionally, UAC utilized the risk assessment process to identify a number of other risk areas that might benefit from compliance monitoring efforts rather than a comprehensive audit. Those areas of risk are separately identified in the 2025-26 Compliance and Ethics Program Plan.

The following Work Plan summarizes planned activity pursuant to the risk-based assessment, required audits, and available hours for UAC to administer the audit and compliance functions at the university:
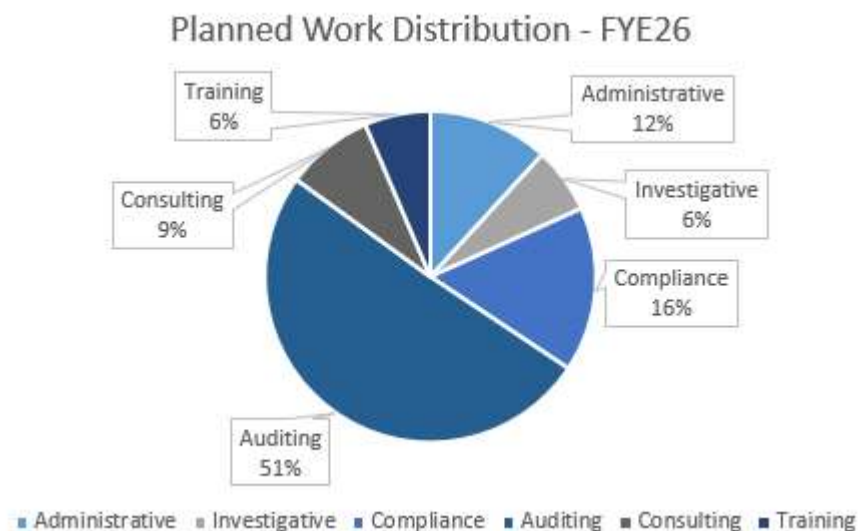
Florida Polytechnic University **University Audit & Compliance** **Work Plan (A)** **2025-26 Fiscal Year**		
Activity	Estimated Hours	Total Hours
ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES:		220
Periodic meetings with President/Board	40	
BOG Communications	40	
Prepare Audit & Compliance Liaison Materials and Attend Briefings	120	
Other	20	
INVESTIGATIVE ACTIES:		120
Complaint Intake, Preliminary Inquiries, Investigations (B)	120	
COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES:		300
Administration of the Compliance and Ethics Program[5]	300	
AUDITING ACTIVITIES:		944
UAC Risk Assessment and Audit Plan 2025-26	80	
UAC Annual Report	40	
Performance Based Funding Data Integrity Audit	386	
Contractual Services Review Follow-up	72	
IT Operational Audit Follow-up	120	
Global Internal Audit Standards Review/Interim QAR	126	
Residential Housing Audit	120	
MANAGEMENT ADVISORY/CONSULTING ACTIVITIES:		160
Various (B)	160	
TRAINING ACTIVITIES:		120
Webinars, SUS Committees, and Continuing Professional Education	120	
Total Estimated Hours	**1,864**	**1,864**

Notes:
  (A) This annual work plan is subject to change based on requests made by the Board to evaluate programs or activities.
  (B) Estimated hours for investigations and management advisory services are not readily quantifiable and could change significantly depending on the number of allegations, investigations, and/or consulting requests.

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[5] Allocation of hours detailed in the separate Compliance and Ethics Program Plan.

The table below identifies current resources available for University Audit and University Compliance during the 2025-26 Plan year: (1 staff FTE)

Available Staffing Hours	
Month	Hours
July	168
August	168
September	168
October	184
November	136
December	144
January	160
February	160
March	176
April	176
May	168
June	176
Sub Total	1,984
Vacation/sick	(120)
Annual hours available	1,864

The graph below depicts the planned allocation of UAC resources, by activity, for the upcoming fiscal year as detailed in the work plan on page 5:

Planned Work Distribution - FYE26

Training 6%
Administrative 12%
Consulting 9%
Investigative 6%
Compliance 16%
Auditing 51%

■ Administrative ■ Investigative ■ Compliance ■ Auditing ■ Consulting ■ Training

Internal Audit – Strategic Plan

Under the IIA's new Global Internal Audit Standards, the Chief Audit Executive (CAE) must develop and implement a strategy for the internal audit function that supports the strategic objectives and success of the organization and aligns with the expectations of the board, senior management, and other key stakeholders.

An internal audit strategy is a plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall objective. The internal audit strategy must include a vision, strategic objectives, and supporting initiatives for the internal audit function. This strategy helps guide the internal audit function toward the fulfillment of the internal audit mandate.

- **Mission:** The mission of UAC is to serve the University by recommending actions to assist them in achieving its strategic and operational objectives and to support and promote a culture of ethics, compliance, risk mitigation, and accountability. This assistance includes providing recommendations to management of activities designed and implemented by management to strengthen internal controls, reduce risk to and waste of resources, and improve operations to enhance the performance and reputation of the University.

- **Vision:** To be a trusted advisor known for providing superior services in support of the University.

Strategic Objectives and Supporting Initiatives:

1. Support University Operational and Financial Integrity
   a. Prioritize resources on high-risk areas with greatest value to drive operational efficiency.
   b. As best possible, fulfill both audit and compliance roles to minimize operational costs to the University.
   c. Demonstrate best practices in audit, investigative, and compliance activities.
2. Develop and Leverage Institutional Resources
   a. Achieve greater efficiencies through implementation of automated processes and defined/repeatable audit methodologies.
   b. Consistent with the revised audit standards, shift more resources from audit to consulting hours.
   c. Expand communications and outreach to better position UAC within the organization.
3. Position University Audit to Seamlessly Transition to a Successor CAE
   a. Expedite external review (QAR) to facilitate smooth transition.
   b. Work with the Board and HR to formalize a succession plan.
   c. Promote and encourage qualified candidates from within the University.

Florida Polytechnic University

Governance, Audit and Compliance Committee

Board of Trustees

September 18, 2025

Subject: **UAC Compliance & Ethics Program Plan FYE26**

Proposed Committee Action

Recommend approval of the University Compliance & Ethics Program Plan for FY26 to the Board of Trustees.

Background Information

Florida Board of Governors Regulation 4.003 provides that each board of trustees shall implement a university-wide compliance and ethics program as a point for coordination of and responsibility for activities that promote ethical conduct and maximize compliance with applicable laws, rules, regulations, rules, policies, and procedures. David Blanton, Chief Compliance Officer (CCO) will present the proposed Plan for the 2025/26 fiscal year. This Plan was developed consistent with applicable codes of conduct and the Federal Sentencing Guidelines and provides for the various planned focus areas for University Compliance.

The Committee should consider whether the Proposed Plan (a) promotes an organizational culture that encourages ethical conduct and a commitment to compliance and (b) allocates University Compliance resources in an efficient and effective manner.

Supporting Documentation: UAC Compliance & Ethics Program Plan Report – FYE26. (Report No. FPU 2026-03)

Prepared by: David A. Blanton, CAE/CCO

University Compliance

Compliance and Ethics Program Plan
2025-26 Fiscal Year
Report No: FPU 2026-03
August 2025

Ethical Quote: "Ethical behavior is not a constraint on success, but rather the key to it."   — Unknown

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I. Background and Overview

Florida Board of Governors (BOG) Regulations[1] provide that each board of trustees shall implement a university-wide compliance and ethics program (Program) as a point for coordination of and responsibility for activities that promote ethical conduct and maximize compliance with applicable laws, regulations, rules, policies, and procedures. The BOG Regulation further provides that the Program shall be:

- Reasonably designed to optimize its effectiveness in preventing or detecting noncompliance, unethical behavior, and criminal conduct, as appropriate to the institution's mission, size, activities, and unique risk profile.
- Developed consistent with various codes of ethics[2] and the Federal Sentencing Guidelines.
- Periodically evaluated for effectiveness.

The Florida Poly Compliance and Ethics Program (Program) was designed with due diligence and the promotion of an organizational culture that encourages ethical conduct and a commitment to compliance, as outlined by the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, for the seven (7) Program components outlined below:

7 Basic Components of an Effective Compliance & Ethics Program

1. Standards, Policies, Procedures
2. Compliance and Ethics Program Administration
3. Conduct Controls for Employees
4. Communication, Education, and Training
5. Monitoring, Auditing, and Reporting System (Hotline)
6. Discipline and Incentives
7. Program Modifications

Each of these seven components required by the Federal Sentencing Guidelines are discussed in greater detail below:

Requirement 1: The organization shall establish standards and procedures to prevent and detect criminal conduct.

Plan Response: The University has adopted the following Regulations and Policies (standards) that effectively communicate management's commitment to prevent and detect criminal conduct:

- *Policy FPU-1.0125P Fraud Prevention and Detection*
- *Regulation FPU-1.015 Allegations of Waste, Fraud, Financial Mismanagement, and Other Abuses*
- *Regulation FPU-6.002 Personnel Code of Conduct and Ethics*
- *Regulation 6.011 Employee Criminal Background Checks*
- *Policy FPU-8.0011P Purchasing of Goods and Services*

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[1] Florida Board of Governors Regulation 4.003, implemented November 3, 2016
[2] Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees contained in Part III, Chapter 112, Florida Statutes and other applicable codes of ethics.

- *Regulation 8.003 Authority to Suspend or Debar Contractors/Vendors*

Periodically, such Policies and Regulations are subjected to Policy review to ensure that they are comprehensive and align with best practices.

University Compliance maintains various reporting mechanisms to report waste, fraud, financial mismanagement and other abuses and the standards outlined above provide that employees are obligated to report known or alleged violations. (See also Requirement 5)

Requirement 2: The organization's governing authority shall be knowledgeable about the Program and exercise reasonable oversight; high-level personnel shall have overall responsibility for the Program and its effectiveness; and the Program shall be afforded adequate resources to carry out operational responsibility of the Program.

Plan Response: The Audit and Compliance Committee (AACC) of Florida Polytechnic University's Board of Trustees is charged with oversight of the Program. This responsibility is outlined in the Charter for the AACC. The Chief Compliance Officer (CCO) is responsible for communicating the details of the Program to the AACC and presenting an annual Program Plan to the AACC for approval. The CCO serves as the liaison to the AACC and provides an update on the Program at each meeting (4 times a year). In addition, the Florida BOG exercises certain oversight of each institution within the State University System (SUS). The CCO has overall responsibility for the Program and has been provided with sufficient resources to carry out operational responsibilities of the Program. Florida Poly's Compliance & Ethics Program obtained its first-ever effectiveness review in June of 2022, and the results were reported to the AACC to facilitate oversight of the Program. The next effectiveness review is due in summer of 2029.

Requirement 3: The organization shall use reasonable efforts to preclude the hiring or employment of personnel that have engaged in illegal activities or other conduct inconsistent with an effective compliance and ethics Program.

Plan Response: Florida Polytechnic University Regulations[3] require background screenings for employees working in areas of special trust or responsibility. Additionally, the Regulation requires that university employees shall immediately notify the university if convicted of a felony or first-degree misdemeanor at any time subsequent to becoming employed by the university. The periodic rescreening of employees, as provided for in the University Regulation, serves to further ensure that university employees have not engaged in illegal activities or other conduct inconsistent with an effective compliance and ethics Program.

Controls over this process were recently subjected to an operational audit performed by the Auditor General[4] with no findings reported.

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[3] Regulation FPU 6.011, Employee Criminal Background Checks
[4] Auditor General Report No. 2024-007, issued August 2023

> **Requirement 4**: The organization shall periodically conduct effective training and otherwise disseminate information in support of the Program.

Plan Response: The University currently provides for the following training relative to the Compliance and Ethics Program:

- At new employee orientation, all new hires are provided with training and a copy of our Employee Handbook from our Human Resources Department. The training and the Employee Handbook include an overview of the Employee Code of Conduct and the University's commitment to the highest degree of ethical standards and conduct. The new employee orientation also includes information relative to compliance with sexual harassment (Title IX Compliance), public records and the Sunshine law, official university travel, time and attendance requirements (Fair Labor Standards Act Compliance), leave policies (FMLA compliance), and discrimination/equal opportunity (Federal EEO compliance).
- New employees are required to complete on-line cyber security awareness training that covers FERPA compliance, the Clery Act, Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLBA compliance), protecting personally identifiable information (PII) and other compliance matters related to information systems and data maintained by the University. In addition, this training is required annually for all employees. Controls over this area were recently reviewed in the most recent operational audit of the university by the Auditor General[4].
- New employees are required to complete an on-line sexual harassment training program, and our Title IX coordinator provides additional training opportunities throughout the year on sexual harassment.
- All new Board of Trustee (BoT) members attend an orientation that is hosted by the President, the General Counsel, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Chief Audit Executive/Chief Compliance Officer. The orientation includes the dissemination of information related to Florida Sunshine laws, conflicts of interest, and the Board of Trustees ethics policy which incorporates the Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees set forth in Part III of Chapter 112, Florida Statutes. Additionally, Florida Poly BoT members are required to attend a BOG orientation session prior to service on the university board.
- The university is currently exploring various learning management systems which should enhance the delivery and tracking of training efforts of other training efforts throughout the institution.

If applicable, training in additional areas with high risk of noncompliance will be developed and conducted by the CCO as provided for in the **Compliance Plan for Key Risks/Compliance Focus Areas** Section of this Program Plan. (Section II)

Requirement 5: The organization shall take reasonable steps to ensure that (a) the Program is properly monitored in order to detect criminal conduct (b) evaluate the effectiveness of the Program and (c) publicize a system providing for reporting mechanisms to report or seek guidance on potential or actual criminal conduct.

Plan Response: With regard to each of the elements specified above in Requirement 5:

(a) As noted in Requirement 3 above, University Regulations[3] require that university employees shall immediately notify the university if convicted of a felony or first-degree misdemeanor any time subsequent to becoming employed by the university. The periodic rescreening of employees, as provided for in this University Regulation, serves to further ensure that university employees have not engaged in illegal activities or other conduct inconsistent with an effective compliance and ethics Program.

(b) BOG Regulations[5] require that at least once every five (5) years, the president and board of trustees shall be provided with an external review of the Program's design and effectiveness and any recommendations for improvement, as appropriate. The first ever effectiveness review was completed in June of 2022. (See also **Section II** and **Section III**)

(c) The "Compliance and Ethics Hotline" was established to report suspected or actual instances of noncompliance, fraud, waste, or abuse directly to the CCO as outlined below:
1. An on-line reporting form.
2. Telephone
3. Fax
4. Direct mail to P.O. Box.

These mechanisms are publicized on the University website which also has direct links to all University Regulations and Policies that effectively communicate management's commitment to prevent and detect criminal conduct. As provided for in University Policy[6], retaliation, or otherwise taking adverse action against any member of the University community because that individual reported or filed a complaint alleging a violation, testified or participated in an investigation or proceeding, or opposed discriminatory practices, is strictly prohibited and could result in expulsion or termination.

Requirement 6: The Program shall be promoted through appropriate *incentives* and provide for appropriate *disciplinary measures* for engaging in criminal conduct and for failing to take reasonable steps to prevent or detect criminal conduct.

Plan Response: (Incentives): The current "Performance Review Form", used for evaluations is tied to merit/promotional increases, and utilizes the following criteria for evaluation: (1 of 8 criteria applied)

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[5] Board of Governors Regulation 4.003 (7)(c), implemented November 3, 2016
[6] Policy FPU-1.0125P, Fraud Prevention and Detection

- **Stewardship of Resources: Demonstrates responsible use of University and State resources; seeks cost-effective solutions.**

(Disciplinary measures): University Regulations[7], provide that University personnel who are determined to have violated the Code of Ethics are subject to disciplinary action. Disciplinary actions may include penalties such as dismissal, suspension, demotion, reduction in salary, forfeiture of salary, restitution, public censure, and/or reprimand; other disciplinary actions as may be deemed appropriate.

> **Requirement 7**: After noncompliance, unethical behavior, or criminal conduct has been detected, the organization shall take further reasonable steps to prevent further occurrences, including Program modifications.

Plan Response: Neither significant unethical behavior or criminal conduct has occurred at the University; however, the University is continually seeking to improve on processes and procedures that ensure compliance with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and laws. To the extent that significant criminal conduct or unethical behavior was ever detected, the Program would be modified to mitigate future occurrences.

II. Compliance Plan for Key Risks/Compliance Focus Areas

This Compliance and Ethics Program Plan has identified seven (7) different areas of focus for the 2025-26 fiscal year. These focus areas were selected on the basis of perceived risk and available resources, and specifically relate to the following areas:

- Textbook Affordability and Transparency Compliance Monitoring Reviews:
  - o Planned scope to include compliance with the State law[8] requiring the timely posting textbooks and instructional materials for the fall and spring terms. Scope will also include newly required transparency requirements (posting of syllabi and faculty attestations).
  - o Ongoing monitoring is necessary to ensure that the university has adequately addressed prior monitoring results related to new legislative requirements.

- Conflict of Interest (COI) & Financial Disclosures:
  - o Planned scope to include a review of COI disclosures; a search for unreported conflicts; and appropriateness of annual financial disclosure reporting.

- Background Screenings:
  - o Planned scope to include a review of recently hired employees and compliance with University policy to ensure that persons hired in areas of special trust or sensitive positions have been timely subjected to background screenings prior to an employment offer.

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[7] Regulation FPU-6.002, Personnel Code of Conduct and Ethics
[8] Section 1004.085(6), Florida Statutes

- Consultative Assistance: Foreign Influence/Foreign Gifts and Contracts:
  - This particular focus area has been of great concern to both the Florida Legislature and to most higher education institutions and thus has been deemed an area of high risk. Additional compliance requirements now required per recent legislative action[9].

- Training & Communications:
  - The focus for the 2025-26 Program year will be on enhanced communications to all university staff promoting compliance and ethics awareness. A goal of 2 communications through the university is planned for the current Program Plan.
  - The CCO will provide periodic updates to the Audit and Compliance Committee (AACC).
    - Quarterly updates to the AACC on the Compliance Program.
    - Periodic reporting, as applicable, of significant allegations and related UAC dispositions to the AACC.

- General Compliance Activities:
  - Ongoing review of existing regulations and policies with an emphasis towards those aimed at promoting compliance and an evaluation of the effectiveness of university operations and the program.

- Allegations/Investigations:
  - This area includes monitoring the Compliance & Ethics hotline and performing preliminary investigative efforts and full investigations, as warranted.

III.   Program Evaluation

Internal Evaluation: Provided that each of the seven (7) Program components required by the Federal Sentencing Guidelines (FSG) Manual has been addressed by this Program Plan, the Program is deemed to be generally effective. Additionally, this is supported by the self-valuation prepared in the 2020-21 fiscal year to determine Program effectiveness and to identify opportunities for continuous improvement to the Program. Most importantly, this evaluation is further supported by observations of the CCO, from the date of his hiring to present, that support management's commitment in both words and action to "do the right thing" to assure that high standards of ethical practice are exhibited in all University business.

External Evaluation: As noted in **Section I**, Requirement (5)(b) above, BOG Regulations[10] require that at least once every five (5) years, the president and board of trustees shall be provided with an external review of the Program's design and effectiveness and any recommendations for improvement, as appropriate.

The SUS Compliance Consortium adopted criteria by which each SUS institution agreed to be evaluated, and UAC used this evaluation tool to complete a self-assessment. A team of two CCO's from Florida State University and New College of Florida were selected and approved by the AACC to perform an

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[9] Section 288.860, Florida Statutes, and BOG Regulation 9.012
[10] Board of Governors Regulation 4.003 (7)(c), implemented November 3, 2016

independent validation of the self-evaluation and report on the effectiveness of the Compliance and Ethics Plan at Florida Poly. The required external review of the program was completed in June of 2022 and the related written report and recommendations were presented to the AACC and the BOG. The Program review concluded that Florida Poly's Program was Generally Effective (highest rating) for all 16 criteria evaluated. The SUS Compliance Consortium is currently revisiting evaluation criteria for the upcoming Program evaluations to be performed in 2027.

IV. Summary

This Compliance and Ethics Program Plan provides for the following components:

- A "Plan Response" to address each of the seven program components set forth in the Federal Sentencing Guidelines. Within **Section I**, each of the various Federal Sentencing Guideline requirements are cited within a boxed border and the Program Plan response follows each requirement.
- Key risks and compliance focus areas deemed necessary to administer the plan. Within **Section II**, such risks and areas of focus were selected based on a review of University risks and the intention of delivering both compliance and audit services in an efficient manner, given the limited resources of the University and the dual responsibilities of the CAE/CCO.
- **Section III** explains the Program evaluation requirements and details Program evaluation efforts.

This approach to establishing the Compliance and Ethics Plan for Florida Poly conforms to requirements set forth in both the Federal Sentencing Guidelines and BOG Regulations.

V. Exhibits

   A.   Compliance & Ethics Program Plan – Estimated Budget

Exhibit A

	Proposed Compliance & Ethics Program Plan Budgeted Hours 2025-26 Fiscal Year		
	Focus Area	**Planned Hours**	**Notes**
1	CMR: Textbook Affordability Compliance Monitoring Review (Fall & Spring)	80	
2	CMR: Conflicts of Interest and Financial Disclosures	60	
3	CMR: Background Screenings	50	
4	Consult: Foreign Influence	32	
5	Training & Communications	28	
6	General Compliance Program	50	
7	Allegations/Investigations	120	a
	Total Estimated	420	b
a	Estimate for monitoring of hotline and investigations; however, actual hours in this area could increase or be less, depending on reported hotline allegations and/or investigative reports released by University Compliance.		
b	Hours for the Compliance Program Plan in agreement with proposed total resource utilization between audit and compliance (As outlined in UAC's risk assessment and Audit Plan. Aggregate time for compliance and investigative activities – see report FPU-2026-02).		
CMR	Compliance Monitoring Review: UAC intends to release a CMR report in connection with this focus area.		

Florida Polytechnic University
Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee
Board of Trustees
September 18, 2025

<u>Subject</u>: Performance Based Funding (PBF) Data Integrity Audit Scope and Objectives

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<u>Proposed Committee Action</u>

Recommend approval to the Board of Trustees of the Performance Based Funding Audit Scope and Objectives to be performed by University Audit.

<u>Background Information</u>

Board of Governors Regulation (BOG) 5.001, Performance Based Funding (PBF) provides that chief audit executives shall conduct or cause to have conducted an annual data integrity audit to verify the data submitted for implementing the Performance-based Funding Model complies with the data definitions established by the BOG. The audit report shall be presented to the university's board of trustees for its review, acceptance, and use in completing the data integrity certification. The audit report and data integrity certification are due to the BOG's Office of Inspector General by March 1 each year.

The following representation is included on the BOG-developed data integrity certification which must be signed by the Board Chair and President of the University:

- I certify that I agreed to the scope of work for the performance-based funding data integrity audit conducted by my chief audit executive (CAE).

Therefore, the University's CAE will present the planned scope of work for the required PBF audit to the Committee for review and approval.

Supporting Documentation:

1. Memo from Board of Governors on PBF Audits and Certifications
2. Data Integrity Certification Form
3. UAC PBF Data Integrity Audit Scope & Objectives Document

Prepared by: David A. Blanton, CAE/CCO

Florida Board of Governors
State University System of Florida
325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1614
Tallahassee, FL 32399
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www.flbog.edu

MEMORANDUM

TO: University Chief Audit Executives

FROM: Julie Leftheris, Inspector General and Director of Compliance

DATE: June 23, 2025

RE: Data Integrity Audits and Certifications for Performance-based Funding
                 and Preeminence Metrics

The following are the data integrity audit and certification requirements for the March 2026 reporting to the Board of Governors.

As required by Florida Statutes,[1] university boards of trustees shall direct the university's chief audit executive to perform, or cause to have performed by an independent audit firm, an annual audit of the university's processes that ensure the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of data submissions. These audits should also include testing of data that supports performance funding metrics, as well as preeminence or emerging preeminence metrics for those universities so designated. Testing is essential in determining that processes are in place and working as intended. The audits may be conducted as joint or separate engagements.

The scope and objectives of the audit(s) should be set jointly between the chair of the university board of trustees and the university chief audit executive. The audit(s) shall be performed in conformance with the Institute of Internal Auditors' *Global Internal Audit Standards*.

University presidents should use the results from the data integrity audit(s) to complete the Data Integrity Certification and evaluate each of the nine (9) prepared representations to affirm or modify them, if needed, in the space provided. It is important that representations be modified to reflect significant or material audit findings noted in the audit report. The certification document shall be signed by the university president and board of trustees' chair after being approved by the board of trustees.

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[1] Florida Statutes, sections 1001.706(5)(e), *Powers and Duties of the Board of Governors*; 1001.7065, *Preeminent State Research Universities Program;* and 1001.92, *State University System Performance-based Incentive*

Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University | Florida Atlantic University | Florida Gulf Coast University | Florida International University
Florida Polytechnic University | Florida State University | New College of Florida | University of Central Florida
University of Florida | University of North Florida | University of South Florida | University of West Florida

The audit results and any corrective action plans shall be provided to the Board of Governors after being accepted by the university's board of trustees. The completed Data Integrity Certification and audit report(s) shall be submitted to the Office of Inspector General and Director of Compliance no later than **March 1, 2026,** via the Chief Audit Executives Reporting System (CAERS). Please ensure they are ADA compliant in accordance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act prior to submission.

Please consider the March 1st deadline in planning your audit to allow sufficient time for presenting the results to the university's board of trustees. We will need final audit reports and certifications by that date to be included in our March Board of Governors' meeting materials.

On behalf of the Board of Governors Chair and Chancellor, we commend you, your data administrators, and the many university staff responsible for ensuring reliable, accurate, and complete information is timely submitted to the Board of Governors.

If you have questions regarding these requirements, please do not hesitate to contact my office at BOGInspectorGeneral@flbog.edu or 850-245-0466.

JML/lc

Attachment: Data Integrity Certification Form, March 2026

C: Aubrey Edge, Chair, Board of Governors Audit and Compliance Committee
        Raymond Rodrigues, Chancellor

Data Integrity Certification
March 2026

In accordance with Board of Governors Regulation 5.001(8), university presidents and boards of trustees are to review, accept, and use the annual data integrity audit to verify that the data submitted for implementing the Performance-based Funding model complies with the data definitions established by the Board of Governors.

Given the importance of submitting accurate and reliable data, boards of trustees for those universities designated as preeminent or emerging preeminent are also asked to review, accept, and use the annual data integrity audit of those metrics to verify that the data submitted complies with the data definitions established by the Board of Governors.

Applicable Board of Governors Regulations and Florida Statutes: Regulations 1.001(3)(f), 3.007, and 5.001; Sections 1001.706(5)(e), 1001.7065, and 1001.92, Florida Statutes.

Instructions: To complete this certification, university presidents and boards of trustees are to review each representation in the section below and confirm compliance by signing in the appropriate spaces provided at the bottom of the form. *Should there be an exception to any of the representations, please describe the exception in the space provided.*

Once completed and signed, convert the document to a PDF and ensure it is ADA compliant. Then submit it via the Chief Audit Executives Reports System (CAERS) by **close of** business **on March 1, 2026**.

University Name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Data Integrity Certification Representations:

1. I am responsible for establishing and maintaining, and have established and maintained, effective internal controls and monitoring over my university's collection and reporting of data submitted to the Board of Governors Office, which will be used by the Board of Governors in Performance-based Funding decision-making and Preeminence or Emerging-preeminence Status.

2. In accordance with Board of Governors Regulation 1.001(3)(f), my Board of Trustees has required that I maintain an effective information system to provide accurate, timely, and cost-effective information about the university, and shall require that all data and reporting requirements of the Board of Governors are met.

3. In accordance with Board of Governors Regulation 3.007, my university provided accurate data to the Board of Governors Office.

4. In accordance with Board of Governors Regulation 3.007, I have tasked my Data Administrator to ensure the data file (prior to submission) is consistent with the criteria established by the Board of Governors. The due diligence includes performing tests on the file using applications, processes, and data definitions provided by the Board Office. A written explanation of any identified critical errors was included with the file submission.

5. In accordance with Board of Governors Regulation 3.007, my Data Administrator has submitted data files to the Board of Governors Office in accordance with the specified schedule.

6. I am responsible for taking timely and appropriate preventive/ corrective actions for deficiencies noted through reviews, audits, and investigations.

7. I recognize that Board of Governors' and statutory requirements for the use of data related to the Performance-based Funding initiative and Preeminence or Emerging-preeminence status consideration will drive university policy on a wide range of university operations – from admissions through graduation. I certify that university policy changes and decisions impacting data used for these purposes have been made to bring the university's operations and practices in line with State University System Strategic Plan goals and have not been made for the purposes of artificially inflating the related metrics.

8. I certify that I agreed to the scope of work for the Performance-based Funding Data Integrity Audit and the Preeminence or Emerging-preeminence Data Integrity Audit (if applicable) conducted by my chief audit executive.

9. In accordance with section 1001.706, Florida Statutes, I certify that the audit conducted verified that the data submitted pursuant to sections 1001.7065 and 1001.92, Florida Statutes [regarding Preeminence and Performance-based Funding, respectively], complies with the data definitions established by the Board of Governors.

Exceptions to Note: Click or tap here to enter text.

Data Integrity Certification Representations, Signatures:

I certify that all information provided as part of the Board of Governors Data Integrity Certification for Performance-based Funding and Preeminence or Emerging-preeminence status (if applicable) is true and correct to the best of my knowledge; and I understand that any unsubstantiated, false, misleading, or withheld information relating to these statements render this certification void. My signature below acknowledges that I have read and understand these statements. I certify that this information will be reported to the board of trustees and the Board of Governors.

Certification: _____   Date: _____
　　　　　　　University President

I certify that this Board of Governors Data Integrity Certification for Performance-based Funding and Preeminence or Emerging-preeminence status (if applicable) has been approved by the university board of trustees and is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Certification: _____   Date: _____
　　　　　　　University Board of Trustees Chair

Overall Objectives:

- To determine whether the University has established appropriate controls to ensure the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of data submissions to the Board of Governors (BOG) which support the Performance Based Funding (PBF) Metrics of the University as of September 30, 2025.
- To provide assurance that the various data files which support the PBF metrics, as of September 30, 2025, have been subjected to audit and tested for accuracy and completeness.
- To provide reasonable assurance to the President and the Chair of the Board of Trustees (BOT) that the representations included in the Performance Based Funding – Data Integrity Certification form are fairly presented.

Audit Scope and Methodology:

	Audit Scope	Methodology
1.	Evaluate the validity of representations outlined in the Performance Based Funding – Data Integrity Certification form.	Inquiry and observation of records supporting representations.
2.	Evaluate controls established to ensure the completeness, accuracy, and timely submission of the various data files that are submitted periodically by Institutional Research (IR) to the BOG. (e.g. degrees awarded file, hours to degree file, retention file, student financial aid file, student instruction file).	Inquiry and observation of evidence supporting IR submissions to the BOG. Review of written procedures developed to support data integrity over IR submissions.
3.	Evaluation of access controls.	Review of system access controls and user privileges over those systems generating data for the various metrics.
4.	Testing of data accuracy and completeness.	For the various systems of record used to produce data submissions (as listed in 2 above) select samples and perform detailed tests to ensure that the underlying data for various BOG submissions is accurate and complete.

For any other data reported by IR and used for PBF metrics, select a sample and perform detailed tests to ensure the accuracy and completeness of |

		such data. (e.g. workforce experience used in BOT choice metric 10).
5.	Determine that the various data files that are submitted periodically by Institutional Research (IR) to the BOG are consistent with data definitions and guidance provided by the BOG.	Accomplished in conjunction with the methodology from 4 above.
6.	Review of data resubmissions and data reclassifications to ensure that they are appropriate and conform to BOG guidance.	100% review of any cohort classification changes since the BOG does not verify appropriateness of such changes. Inquiry and detailed testing of other metric reclassifications noted or identified. Review of resubmissions applicable to PBF data files.

Florida Polytechnic University

Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee

Board of Trustees

September 18, 2025

Subject: Evaluation Instrument for President's Annual Review

Proposed Committee Action

Recommend approval to the Board of Trustees of the "President's Evaluation Instrument FY25" to be used in the Trustees' evaluation of the president's performance for fiscal year 2025.

Background Information

In the past, the Board has used an evaluation instrument to obtain feedback from each Trustee as a part of the President's annual evaluation process. The proposed evaluation instrument is modeled after the last 5 years evaluation instruments, and President Stephenson's Administrative Action Plan FY25, approved by the Board on September 30, 2024. The approved evaluation instrument, along with the President's Accomplishments FYE25, will be sent to each Trustee in mid-October for completion.

Supporting Documentation:

1. Draft President's Evaluation Instrument FY25
2. President's Administrative Action Plan FY25
3. Florida Polytechnic University Board of Trustees Policy on Annual Review of the President

Prepared by: David Fugett, Vice President and General Counsel

President Stephenson's Annual Review
(July 2024 to June 2025)

Trustee's name

_____

1. **IMPACT**
   This effort will actively synchronize Florida Polytechnic University's brand awareness with community workforce and economic development initiatives across the region and state. The focus will be to position Florida Poly as a primary institution of higher education within Florida and the region, strengthening the presence, reputation, and influence of the university.

Strategic Relationships: We will lead a robust advocacy and lobbying effort to secure additional resources at the state and federal levels, working closely with lobbying firms, enhanced strategic relationships, and key stakeholders, including the Board of Trustees and the Foundation Board of Directors.

☐ Not Achieved ☐ Partially Achieved ☐ Achieved ☐ Exceeded ☐ Far Exceeded

Comments on Strategic Relationships:

_____

_____

_____

President Stephenson's Annual Review
(July 2024 to June 2025)

Global Voice: We will establish a nationally recognized President's Speaker Series, widely promoted to ensure active participation from local, regional, national, and global influencers. This series will enhance the leadership presence of the university and its engagement within the community.

☐ Not Achieved ☐ Partially Achieved ☐ Achieved ☐ Exceeded ☐ Far Exceeded

Comments on Global Voice:

_____

_____

_____

Economic Driver: We will enhance our current work by building additional public-private partnerships.

☐ Not Achieved ☐ Partially Achieved ☐ Achieved ☐ Exceeded ☐ Far Exceeded

Comments on Economic Driver:

_____

_____

_____

President Stephenson's Annual Review
(July 2024 to June 2025)

New Revenue: We will develop a federal resource initiative involving the onboarding of a grants development office and Washington DC government relations firm.

- E.g. Growth in Research Expenditures ($K); Growth of Grant Proposals; % of External Grants Funded

☐ Not Achieved ☐ Partially Achieved ☐ Achieved ☐ Exceeded ☐ Far Exceeded

Comments on New Revenue:

_____

_____

_____

2. **EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE**

Faculty: We will explore programs and opportunities to support and develop existing faculty thereby making Florida Poly a place where faculty want to make their careers. By retaining highly credentialed teaching and research faculty, the university will ensure that the academic programs remain rigorous and innovative, fostering an environment of excellence in science, technology, engineering, and math education. (Numerous stakeholders have expressed the importance of reducing faculty attrition and turn-over.)

- E.g. Faculty-to-Administrative Ratio; % of Faculty Participating in Professional Development; % of Faculty Turnover

☐ Not Achieved ☐ Partially Achieved ☐ Achieved ☐ Exceeded ☐ Far Exceeded

Comments on Faculty:

_____

_____

_____

Wrap-Around Services: We will implement strategies to increase student retention by providing stronger academic support, career counseling, and engagement opportunities. In tandem with these efforts, the university will launch targeted recruitment initiatives to grow the student enrollment, ensuring a high-achieving student body.

☐ Not Achieved ☐ Partially Achieved ☐ Achieved ☐ Exceeded ☐ Far Exceeded

Comments on Wrap-Around Services:

_____

_____

President Stephenson's Annual Review
(July 2024 to June 2025)

_____

Improved Performance: We will prioritize improving the university's performance within Florida's SUS Performance Funding Metrics. The university will accomplish this by tracking and enhancing key student success metrics, including FTIC 4-year graduation rates, academic progress rates, and Pell Recipient retention rates.

- E.g. Academic Progress Rate; 4 & 6-Yr Graduation Rates; % of Pell Awards; Time-to-Degree; % of DFW Rates; % of Students in Employer Engagement; % Graduates Employed or Enrolled; Median Wages of BS Graduates

☐ Not Achieved   ☐ Partially Achieved   ☐ Achieved   ☐ Exceeded   ☐ Far Exceeded

Comments on Improved Performance:

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_____

Future-Talent: We will begin discussions around the feasibility of a STEM-focused Institute of Excellence for high academic performing school students. In time, it will be known as the #1 STEM Charter Academy in Florida and create a significant profit center for the University. This initiative will create a seamless transition for high-performing students into Florida Poly's freshman year, ensuring a strong pipeline of talent aligned with the university's academic goals.

☐ Not Achieved   ☐ Partially Achieved   ☐ Achieved   ☐ Exceeded   ☐ Far Exceeded

Comments on Future-Talent:

_____

_____

3. **CULTURE**

Cohesive Leadership focused on Strategy: We will solidify the senior leadership team into an effective, cohesive group of selfless professionals working together for the betterment of the whole university community.

☐ Not Achieved ☐ Partially Achieved ☐ Achieved ☐ Exceeded ☐ Far Exceeded

Comments on Cohesive Leadership focused on Strategy:

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_____

_____

Principle-driven: We will lead a laser-focused effort in concert with the Human Resources Department, President's Strategy Circle, and numerous internal stakeholders for the purpose of resetting the institution's culture to foster respect, transparency, and integrity while promoting proactive leadership.

☐ Not Achieved ☐ Partially Achieved ☐ Achieved ☐ Exceeded ☐ Far Exceeded

Comments on Principle-driven:

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Vibrant Campus Life: We will improve the campus life experience by investing in recreational facilities, social spaces, and extracurricular programs to enrich student life, and in coordination with student leadership, explore the feasibility of an expanded collegiate athletics initiative.
- E.g. % of Students Participating in Clubs/Organizations; % of Students Participating in Recreational Activities

☐ Not Achieved ☐ Partially Achieved ☐ Achieved ☐ Exceeded ☐ Far Exceeded

Comments on Vibrant Campus Life:

_____

_____

_____

Data-Informed at All Levels: Florida Poly will streamline organizational processes, reduce bureaucracy, and improve efficiency. This includes enhancing Information Technology architecture to support academic programs and secure institutional data. We will effectively implement the Ellucian Banner ERP to support administrative functions and enhance the student experience with university business. By eliminating bureaucracy and departmental silos, the university will foster a cohesive environment where personnel are motivated to pursue ambitious, long-term goals.
- E.g. % of Staff Participating in Professional Development; % of Staff Turnover

☐ Not Achieved ☐ Partially Achieved ☐ Achieved ☐ Exceeded ☐ Far Exceeded

Comments on Date-Informed at All Levels:

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_____

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President Stephenson's Annual Review
(July 2024 to June 2025)

4. GROWTH

Enrollment: We will enhance the university's investment in recruitment operations to align with the university's ambitions for enrollment growth. We will reset the marketing and branding strategy of Florida Poly by leveraging analytics to increase high-quality applicants and university enrollment, particularly those demonstrating merit, intelligence, and academic excellence.

- E.g. % Yield-Admitted to Enrolled; % of Annual Enrollment Growth; % of Annual Program Growth; % of New Students that are Calculus Ready; Median Standardized Scores in Math for Freshmen.

☐ Not Achieved ☐ Partially Achieved ☐ Achieved ☐ Exceeded ☐ Far Exceeded

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Comments on Enrollment:

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_____

_____

Faculty: We will enhance the faculty recruitment program by offering competitive salaries and compensation packages. By attracting highly credentialed teaching and research faculty, we foster stronger student engagement and advance our reputation as a leader in STEM education and research.

- E.g. Student-to-Faculty Ratio; distribution of faculty by rank

☐ Not Achieved ☐ Partially Achieved ☐ Achieved ☐ Exceeded ☐ Far Exceeded

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Comments on Faculty:

_____

_____

President Stephenson's Annual Review
(July 2024 to June 2025)

_____

Degree Programs: Develop a multi-year plan, based on institutional mission and informed by market-demand and long-term value proposition, for adding undergraduate and graduate degree programs and expanding modalities for existing programs to attract adult learners and career professionals. Balance our program portfolio by adding foundational and innovative science programs that lead to high-demand, high-wage STEM careers, especially in the medical and health science sectors.

- E.g. ratio of different types of programs beneath that STEM umbrella

☐ Not Achieved ☐ Partially Achieved ☐ Achieved ☐ Exceeded ☐ Far Exceeded

Comments on Degree Programs:

_____

_____

_____

Foundation: Aggressively grow the assets of the University's Foundation to both operationally support the institution and provide scholarship dollars to students and to reduce the impact of the DSO's personnel and operational costs on our E & G operating budget.

- E.g. % of Alumni Engagement; Growth in Philanthropic Giving.

☐ Not Achieved ☐ Partially Achieved ☐ Achieved ☐ Exceeded ☐ Far Exceeded

Comments on Foundation:

_____

_____

_____

President Stephenson's Annual Review
(July 2024 to June 2025)

OVERALL RATING

☐ Not Achieved ☐ Partially Achieved ☐ Achieved ☐ Exceeded ☐ Far Exceeded

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

GENERAL COMMENTS

_____

_____

_____

Florida Polytechnic University President's Administrative Action Plan for FY25

Introduction

As we embark on Academic Year 2025, it is with great anticipation and commitment that I present the President's Administrative Action Plan to the Board of Trustees. This comprehensive plan outlines the strategic initiatives and objectives that I have determined are necessary to continue driving our university toward excellence. The success of this plan will be measured by both qualitative and quantitative metrics, ensuring a comprehensive approach to evaluating progress and achievements.

Keeping the university president accountable to the Board of Trustees ensures that decisions are aligned with Florida Poly's mission, fosters transparency, and maintains a focus on long-term success. This accountability is crucial for driving progress, achieving excellence, and sustaining the trust and confidence of all university stakeholders.

Qualitative Measures

We will focus on the quality of our processes, the satisfaction of our stakeholders, and the overall impact (ROI) of our initiatives. These qualitative measures will include formal and informal methods:

- Employee and stakeholder feedback through conversations and Board of Trustees' meeting presentations throughout the academic year.
- Surveys, focus groups, and progress reports that highlight significant achievements and improvements.
- Informal personnel feedback to determine improvements in organizational culture and climate.

Quantitative Measures

In parallel, we will rigorously track our progress through quantitative data, providing clear and objective benchmarks for our performance. These metrics will include:

- Key performance indicators (KPIs) for each of our newly created Strategic Plan Goals.
- Student success, as measured by achievement, persistence, and completion.
- Financial performance metrics such as budget adherence and cost savings.
- Productivity and efficiency metrics across academic, business, and student-focused departments.

This dual approach of qualitative and quantitative evaluation will ensure a more comprehensive assessment of our efforts and outcomes. The Board of Trustees will review the accomplishment of this Action Plan, holding the President accountable for delivering on our commitments and driving Florida Polytechnic University towards greater success**.**

We look forward to the collective efforts and contributions of our dedicated team as we strive to meet and exceed the goals set forth in this Administrative Action Plan for AY25.

Forward-Thinking: An Overview
At the outset, the University will develop a comprehensive strategic plan that incorporates input from both internal and external stakeholders. The Strategic Plan will guide Florida Poly's future, ensuring that all advocacy efforts are aligned with the university's mission and vision, and that the resources secured are strategically deployed to support the university's growth and long-term success.

Meanwhile, as the strategic planning process develops, we will engage in multiple, synergistic efforts designed to enlarge the University's impact, advance educational excellence, promote a positive culture, and grow our vision for stronger Florida Poly.

1. **Impact**
   This effort will actively synchronize Florida Polytechnic University's brand awareness with community workforce and economic development initiatives across the region and state. The focus will be to position Florida Poly as a primary institution of higher education within Florida and the region, strengthening the presence, reputation, and influence of the university.
   - **Strategic Relationships**: We will lead a robust advocacy and lobbying effort to secure additional resources at the state and federal levels, working closely with lobbying firms, enhanced strategic relationships, and key stakeholders, including the Board of Trustees and the Foundation Board of Directors.
   - **Global Voice:** We will establish a nationally recognized *President's Speaker Series*, widely promoted to ensure active participation from local, regional, national, and global influencers. This series will enhance the leadership presence of the university and its engagement within the community.
   - **Economic Driver:** We will enhance our current work by building additional public-private partnerships.
   - **New Revenue:** We will develop a federal resource initiative involving the onboarding of a grants development office and Washington DC government relations firm.
     - E.g. Growth in Research Expenditures ($K); Growth of Grant Proposals; % of External Grants Funded

2. **Educational Excellence**
   - **Faculty:** We will explore programs and opportunities to support and develop existing faculty thereby making Florida Poly a place where faculty want to make their careers. By retaining highly credentialed teaching and research faculty, the university will ensure that the academic programs remain rigorous and innovative, fostering an environment of excellence in science, technology, engineering, and math education. (Numerous stakeholders have expressed the importance of reducing faculty attrition and turn-over.)
     - E.g. Faculty-to-Administrative Ratio; % of Faculty Participating in Professional Development; % of Faculty Turnover
   - **Wrap-Around Services**: We will implement strategies to increase student retention by providing stronger academic support, career counseling, and engagement opportunities. In tandem with these efforts, the university will launch targeted recruitment initiatives to grow the student enrollment, ensuring a high-achieving student body.

- **Improved Performance:** We will prioritize improving the university's performance within Florida's SUS Performance Funding Metrics. The university will accomplish this by tracking and enhancing key student success metrics, including FTIC 4-year graduation rates, academic progress rates, and Pell Recipient retention rates.
  - E.g. Academic Progress Rate; 4 & 6-Yr Graduation Rates; % of Pell Awards; Time-to-Degree; % of DFW Rates; % of Students in Employer Engagement; % Graduates Employed or Enrolled; Median Wages of BS Graduates
- **Future-Talent:** We will begin discussions around the feasibility of a STEM-focused Institute of Excellence for high academic performing school students. In time, it will be known as the #1 STEM Charter Academy in Florida and create a significant profit center for the University. This initiative will create a seamless transition for high-performing students into Florida Poly's freshman year, ensuring a strong pipeline of talent aligned with the university's academic goals.

3. **Culture**
   - **Cohesive Leadership focused on Strategy**: We will solidify the senior leadership team into an effective, cohesive group of selfless professionals working together for the betterment of the whole university community.
   - **Principle-driven:** We will lead a laser-focused effort in concert with the Human Resources Department, President's Strategy Circle, and numerous internal stakeholders for the purpose of resetting the institution's culture to foster respect, transparency, and integrity while promoting proactive leadership.
   - **Vibrant Campus Life:** We will improve the campus life experience by investing in recreational facilities, social spaces, and extracurricular programs to enrich student life, and in coordination with student leadership, explore the feasibility of an expanded collegiate athletics initiative.
     - E.g. % of Students Participating in Clubs/Organizations; % of Students Participating in Recreational Activities
   - **Data-Informed at All Levels:** Florida Poly will streamline organizational processes, reduce bureaucracy, and improve efficiency. This includes enhancing Information Technology architecture to support academic programs and secure institutional data. We will effectively implement the Ellucian Banner ERP to support administrative functions and enhance the student experience with university business. By eliminating bureaucracy and departmental silos, the university will foster a cohesive environment where personnel are motivated to pursue ambitious, long-term goals.
     - E.g. % of Staff Participating in Professional Development; % of Staff Turnover

4. **Growth**
   - **Enrollment:** We will enhance the university's investment in recruitment operations to align with the university's ambitions for enrollment growth. We will reset the marketing and branding strategy of Florida Poly by leveraging analytics to increase high-quality applicants and university enrollment, particularly those demonstrating merit, intelligence, and academic excellence.
     - E.g. % Yield-Admitted to Enrolled; % of Annual Enrollment Growth; % of Annual Program Growth; % of New Students that are Calculus Ready; Median Standardized Scores in Math for Freshmen.

- **Faculty:** We will enhance the faculty recruitment program by offering competitive salaries and compensation packages. By attracting highly credentialed teaching and research faculty, we foster stronger student engagement and advance our reputation as a leader in STEM education and research.
  - E.g. Student-to-Faculty Ratio; distribution of faculty by rank
- **Degree Programs:** Develop a multi-year plan, based on institutional mission and informed by market-demand and long-term value proposition, for adding undergraduate and graduate degree programs and expanding modalities for existing programs to attract adult learners and career professionals. Balance our program portfolio by adding foundational and innovative science programs that lead to high-demand, high-wage STEM careers, especially in the medical and health science sectors.
  - E.g. ratio of different types of programs beneath that STEM umbrella
- **Foundation:** Aggressively grow the assets of the University's Foundation to both operationally support the institution and provide scholarship dollars to students and to reduce the impact of the DSO's personnel and operational costs on our E & G operating budget.
  - E.g. % of Alumni Engagement; Growth in Philanthropic Giving.

Florida Polytechnic
University Board of Trustees
Policy on Annual Review of the President

This policy supplements Florida Board of Governors ("BOG") regulations and provides guidelines for conducting the annual review and assessment of the President's performance, goals, and compensation by the Board of Trustees ("Board"). This policy outlines the purposes and details the process by which the President's performance, goals, and compensation shall be reviewed by the Board on an annual basis. In addition, a comprehensive review of the President's performance and compensation shall first be conducted toward the latter part of the President's third year of employment with the University and then normally occur at five-year intervals thereafter.

Principles

The Board believes six principles should guide and inform the review of the President's performance:

I. The review should derive from explicit values of the University and from the University's strategic plan, work plan, accountability report, and the BOG's Strategic Plan.
2. The review process should set specific annual goals for the President.
3. Reviewing the President's performance is a non-delegable responsibility of the Board. While other viewpoints may be considered by the Board, specifically those of faculty, the Board must take direct responsibility for the review.
4. The review process should be a reciprocal process that includes a self-evaluation from the President.
5. The review should focus on how well the President advances the major institutional objectives of the University.
6. A formal review should be conducted annually, immediately following the academic year. A comprehensive review should occur the latter part of the President's third year of employment with the University and then normally occur at five-year intervals thereafter. Informal evaluations should occur frequently, in the form of informal conversations between the President and the Board Chair.

Annual Review

Purpose

The purpose of the annual review process is to enable the President to strengthen his or her performance, to enable the President and the Board to set mutually agreeable goals, and to inform the Board's decisions on compensation adjustments and other terms of the President's employment.

Responsibility

The Board is responsible for assessing the President's performance, goals, and compensation. The Board's Governance Committee, as its members shall mutually decide and within the parameters of this policy, is delegated the responsibility for organizing and conducting the annual review process with the President and making recommendations related to the outcome of the annual review, the annual goals, and the President's compensation to the full Board.

Process

1. On or before June 1 of each fiscal year, the President will submit his or her proposed goals for the upcoming fiscal year to the Board Chair and the Governance Committee.
2. The Governance Committee will discuss the goals for the upcoming year with the President and present the proposed goals to the full Board for discussion and approval.
3. In September of each year, the President shall initiate the annual review process by preparing a self-evaluation that addresses higher level activities for the just concluded fiscal year. The President will submit his or her self-evaluation to the Board Chair and the Governance Committee by October 15 of each year. The self-evaluation format will remain the same year to year unless revised by the Committee in consultation with the President in the intervening period.
4. Once the President has submitted the self-evaluation and proposed goals to the Board Chair, the Board Chair shall provide copies of the same to the chair of the BOG and request the chair of the BOG's participation in the annual evaluation; the chair of the BOG may involve the chancellor in the review process. Such participation will include a review of the President's responsiveness to the BOG's strategic goals and priorities and compliance with system-wide regulations.
5. The Governance Committee shall review the self-evaluation and proposed goals and may request any additional information from the President to assist the Board in its review.
6. Prior to the Board meeting at which the President's review, goals, and compensation will be acted upon, the Chair shall send to the President and all members of the Board the self-evaluation and proposed goals, any supplemental information the Governance Committee may have requested of the President and any supplemental information the Governance Committee has developed.
7. The Board shall complete the annual review and make any compensation award contemplated under the President's Employment Agreement no later than December 31 of each year, commencing December 2020.

After the Board's deliberation and action, minutes shall be published to document the review of the President's performance, goals, and any adjustments to the President's compensation.

Outcomes

After the Board's deliberation and action, minutes shall be published to document the review of the President's performance, goals, and any adjustments to the President's compensation.

Comprehensive Review

Purpose
The purpose of the comprehensive review is to strengthen the leadership of the President and Board by assessing the quality of their relationship and the President's performance through an independently conducted process which will normally include a 360°review. The process seeks to gather, on a wide range of management and governance matters, the informed perceptions of leaders of major stakeholder groups, as well as those of the President and trustees.

Responsibility
It is the Board's responsibility to comprehensively assess the quality of the relationship of the President and the Board of Trustees; and the President's performance and compensation, first toward the latter part of the President's third year of employment with the University, and then normally at five-year intervals thereafter. The Governance Committee, as its members shall mutually decide and within the parameters of this policy, is delegated the responsibility for organizing and conducting the comprehensive review process with the President, with the assistance of an independent consultant. The selected consultant shall not be connected, directly or indirectly, with the institution by present or past affiliation. The Board Chair and the President shall be consulted regarding the selection of the consultant. Procedural details shall be decided upon by the Governance Committee, with the consultant's advice and counsel, and within the parameters of this policy.

Process
All activities in this comprehensive review process shall be completed within four months after the selection of the consultant. The activities shall include personal interviews with appropriate individuals, internal and external to the institution, as agreed upon by the Committee and consultant. They also shall agree on the general nature of the questions to ask. A staff member shall be assigned to work directly with the consultant and the Committee.

The customary annual review shall be modified to be consistent with the advice of the consultant and Committee. Prepared in advance of the review process, the President's self-evaluation for years in which a comprehensive review is conducted shall provide a comprehensive picture of the institution's academic, financial, and other indicators of progress during the President's tenure. It should highlight particular achievements, as well as persistent institutional issues.
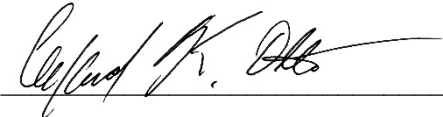
The Committee shall also decide how best to communicate with the University community and Lakeland and Polk County area before, during, and after this process. The Committee is delegated the authority to agree to (1) the consultant's compensation and an appropriate schedule of payments and reimbursements, (2) the general written and/or oral format for the consultant's report (for later submission to the Committee, President, and Board), and (3) the arrangement by which the consultant will be available to discuss the report with the President and the full Board.

Outcomes

The consultant will provide a comprehensive written report detailing the institution's progress and major achievements during the President's tenure, and the Board will consider the consultant's report in the Board's annual review of the President for that year. The consultant's report shall include substantive recommendations for both the President and the Board designed to strengthen the University's leadership, management, and governance.

Note: Portions of this policy were selected from the following publication: **R. T. Ingram and W. A. Weary,** *Presidential & Board Assessment in Higher Education Purposes, Policies & Strategies Appendix B Illustrative Board Policy and Procedures: Annual Presidential Performance Reviews* **(Washington, D.C.: Association of** Governing Boards of Universities and College Publications, 2000), 57-58.

Adopted by the Florida Polytechnic University Board of Trustees on February 17, 2021.

Chair's signature: _____

Florida Polytechnic University

Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee

Board of Trustees

September 18, 2026

Subject: **Employment Practices Report**

Proposed Committee Action

Information only. No action required.

Background Information

Pursuant to section 1001.741, Florida Statutes, the President must annually present the results of performance evaluations and annual salaries for evaluated personnel earning $200,000 or more to the Board of Trustees. Additionally, the President must provide a report and recommendations on employment practices to the Board of Trustees twice annually.

Supporting Documentation: N/A

Prepared by: Dr. Devin Stephenson, President

Florida Polytechnic University
Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee
Board of Trustees
September 18, 2025

Subject: **President's Accomplishments FYE25**

Proposed Committee Action

Information only – no action required.

Background Information

The accompanying document is the final report detailing the president's accomplishments in alignment with the FY25 Administrative Action Plan.

This report will be distributed to the Trustees alongside the evaluation instrument to inform and support the president's annual performance evaluation.

Supporting Documentation: President's FYE25 Accomplishments; The Reset, Restructure, and Refinement of the Administration and Finance Division during Dr. Stephenson's First Year (2024-2025)

Prepared by: Dr. Devin Stephenson, President

	President's FY25 Administrative Action Plan
FLORIDA POLY	**RESULTS REPORT/Self-Assessment**

Impact

Strategic Plan	During FY25, the University created Strategic Plan 25|30 through a broad-based, collaborative, and participatory methodology. The approach engaged a varied group of stakeholders, including student leadership, faculty, staff, administration, Board of Trustees members, Foundation representatives, and external influencers from Central Florida. The result of the nine-month process was a comprehensive plan focused on three strategic priorities: Comprehensive Institutional Growth, Advancement Through Intentional Resource Development, and Academic and Industry Partnerships. Additionally, the Board of Trustees revised the University's mission and vision, adding Guiding Principles to foster a culture from which all decision-making and actions will be framed. Strategic Plan 25|30 was presented during the Board of Governors' March 2025 meeting, where it received accolades from BOG members who encouraged other universities to take note of its exemplary presentation and strong alignment with the SUS Strategic Plan – One SUS.
Strategic Relationships • Secure additional resources through lobbying and strategic relationships	This assessment year, Florida Poly received $22M from the state's 2025 Legislative Session, with authorization from Gov. Ron DeSantis to continue the design phase of the Student Achievement Center and to support efforts toward our Rise to 3,000 by 2030 enrollment goal. A detailed roadmap embedded in the 25|30 Strategic Plan charts the University's course to strengthen all institutional areas. Additionally, the University launched the President's Speaker Series in concert with the Office of Public Policy Events. Funding has been allocated to continue this series into FY26. The institution also successfully met the State University System's Performance-Based Funding goals with a score of 74 and received a full nonrecurring allocation of approximately $10.9M.
Global Voice • Establish President's Speaker Series	Florida Poly is building international distinction through academic exchange, strategic partnerships, and scholarly achievement.

• Build international reputation and partnerships	**Nationally Competitive Awards** • The University was recognized by the U.S. Department of State as one of the nation's top producers of Fulbright STEM scholars. • Faculty participation in the Fulbright Specialist Program increased this year, with two professors selected to collaborate with peers in Spain and Canada. • The University saw an increase in visiting Fulbright Scholars by forming an interdisciplinary research group with Florida Poly faculty in Mechanical Engineering, Data Science and Business Analytics, Electrical Engineering, and Computer Engineering. Five distinguished scholars teamed up with the Florida Poly faculty community. • A growing number of world-class Fulbright students are attracted to Florida Poly, which admitted 11 high-achieving graduate students specializing in computer science, data science, electrical engineering, and engineering management. With an average cumulative GPA of 3.93, the cohort helps elevate the University's reputation for academic excellence both nationally and internationally. • A Florida Poly undergraduate student secured the prestigious Killam Fellowship to study at McGill University – one of Canada's top institutions – in fall 2025. Meanwhile, Florida Poly will host a Killam Fellow pursuing computer science education. **Global Partnerships** • The University has endorsed agreements with Fulbright Germany and Fulbright Hungary, establishing pathways for scholar and faculty exchanges between Florida Poly and universities in the two countries. • It also endorsed an industry agreement with APPLUS+IDIADA, a global leader in intelligent mobility based in Spain. This international partnership is designed to create synergies around research, innovation, student internships, and career opportunities in the areas of transportation and mobility. • Florida Poly also endorsed a collaboration with Afeka Tel Aviv Academic College of Engineering (AFEKA) in Tel Aviv, Israel.

	Technical and Scientific Academies • President Devin Stephenson was nominated and inaugurated as a correspondent academician to the Royal European Academy of Doctors in Barcelona, Spain. Among the members of the 100-year-old organization are luminaries such as Nobel laureates, former heads of state, renowned scholars, and global leaders.
Economic Driver • Build additional public-private partnerships	Florida Poly's agreement with Catapult Lakeland, a local entrepreneurial business incubator, has yielded the development of new inventions, potential patents, and a strong working relationship with the region's healthcare sector, small businesses, and economic ecosystem located in central Lakeland. The partnership with Catapult continues to grow, offering opportunities for faculty and students to engage with entrepreneurs and professionals in product development, patent acquisition, and innovative projects. Additional partnerships established and strengthened during this assessment year include those with the International Motor Sports Association (IMSA), Disney Corporation, Williams Corporation, the Orlando College of Osteopathic Medicine (OCOM), Skyline Maritime Enterprises, the Lakeland Flying Tigers/Detroit Tigers Organization, BayCare Health, AdventHealth, Orlando Health, Moffitt Cancer Center, Polk County Sheriff's Office, Sittadel, Publix, the Space Consortium, Blue Origin, Beep, Mosaic, SunTRAX, and MagCorp. These partnerships are in varying stages of development with Strategic Initiative personnel assigned to each. Vice President Kelli Stargel has created a tracking procedure that monitors the exact phase of each partnership and determines next steps needed to accomplish goals outlined in each MOU or agreement. In 2019, the University conducted an economic impact study. A current study is underway with results expected in the late summer, early fall.
New Revenue • Grants Development Office • Washington, D.C.-based federal relations firm	The establishment of Florida Poly's relationship with Merchant-McIntyre in Washington, D.C., has expanded the University's access to federal grant opportunities. In May 2025, the institution was selected to receive $2.9M through Congressman Scott Franklin's special appropriations allocation. This funding will support the establishment of a Security Operations Center and Artificial Intelligence Lab to be located on the second floor of the Gary C. Wendt Engineering Building opening in Fall 2025. In addition, the University's newly established Grants Development Office now provides the necessary resources to support competitive research proposals by faculty, as well as capacity-building grants that will advance the University's mission and vision.

	In summer 2025, Florida Poly received a new $200,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to support research on the cognitive development of engineering students pursuing their degrees.
Educational Excellence	
Faculty • Recruit and retain excellent faculty	Through strategic planning and with the onboarding of a new provost, Florida Poly has fully realigned its academic enterprise. As a result, it has added 25 new faculty for Fall 2025. These highly qualified individuals will fill many previously vacant positions and support the expansion of course offerings across new academic programs, credentials, and certifications, directly contributing to student success. Faculty retention remains a top priority. The University previously experienced notable faculty attrition, with an average loss of 11 full-time faculty members annually over the past three years. This year, faculty attrition dropped by 75%, marking a significant step toward strengthening institutional stability.
Wraparound Services • Improve retention (APR) through support services and systems • Increase enrollment	Through the development of a new strategic enrollment management model, the institution is experiencing significant gains in applications, inquiries, and deposits. Undergraduate enrollment for Fall 2025 is expected to exceed that of Fall 2024, in addition to a substantial increase in graduate student enrollment. These indicators reflect the success of Florida Poly's proactive approach to identifying challenges and swiftly implementing solutions. While motivated by progress, the University remains committed to continuous improvement and attracting the brightest and best students across all programs. A comprehensive Enrollment Management Workgroup is now meeting bi-weekly where departments collaborate and are empowered to drive strategies to grow enrollment and improve student success. Graduate student enrollment has increased by 200% and the University is actively expanding efforts to recruit and enroll new master's degree candidates. We reduced student academic suspensions by 62% year over year by modifying our academic standing policy and we reduced our Spring DFW (Drop, Fail, Withdrawal) rate to 9.9%, a 15% year over year decline.

Improved Performance	Florida Poly maintained its place in the State University System's Performance-Based Funding model, earning a score of 74, equal to the prior year. While Florida Poly did not advance in its overall ranking, the University earned the maximum score of 10 points in six of the 11 measured metrics, and a score of 8 on Metric 7, with lower scores on Metrics 4, 9a, and 9b.
• SUS Performance-Based Funding metrics • FTIC 4-year graduation rates • Pell recipient retention rates	
	Through targeted initiatives focused on enrollment growth and academic support, this administration is actively working to improve the University's PBF rankings and advance to the top. The goal is to become a top performer across all metrics and to influence the PBF formula to accommodate the demands of Florida Poly's rigorous STEM curriculum, which is unlike any in the SUS. Together, Florida Poly's leadership team is driven to ensure the University's programs are recognized as distinctive, academically challenging, and known for yielding the best student outcomes.
	In February 2025, a team of ABET reviewers visited Florida Poly's campus to reaffirm accreditation for programs in computer science and electrical, computer, and mechanical engineering, as well as to initially review the environmental engineering program. While some programs received minor recommendations and have already completed their required response phase, two programs – mechanical and environmental – had no concerns whatsoever. A final decision from ABET's board is expected in August 2025, indicating overall approval and the next required reporting period.
Future Talent • Explore feasibility of a STEM-focused Institute of Excellence (Charter Academy)	This year, Florida Poly began exploring the creation of a STEM-focused Institute of Excellence/Lab School, similar to the model recently launched by Florida State University Panama City. With new statutes in place, the University now has the opportunity to charter its own institution to better prepare students in the region for Florida Poly's Programs of Strategic Emphasis.
	It is critical to heighten public awareness of the importance and long-term value of STEM education, not only to individual students but to Florida's growing high-tech economy. According to a recent article published by financial news site Moneywise, the top three undergraduate degrees for return on investment are in engineering, computer science/IT, and biochemistry. These graduates earn between 310% and 326% return within five years of graduation.
Additional Activity and Recognition	During the 2024-25 assessment year, Florida Poly began navigating the process of transitioning institutional accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) through an accelerated pathway. The U.S. Department of Education formally approved the transition, and the University promptly submitted its application to join HLC. Florida Poly has been invited to move to the next phase of the process, which is expected to conclude in Spring 2027.

President Stephenson was selected by the SACSCOC Executive Council to serve on the Presidential Search Committee for the selection of the association's next CEO. He continues to chair reaffirmation committees for SACSCOC, including a 2025 visit to Galveston College, and has been appointed to chair reviews for Brazosport College and the University of Virginia in FY26.

In recognition of service and leadership, President Stephenson was honored with the HEI (Higher Education Innovation) Lifetime Achievement Leadership Award. He was also named one of Florida's Top 500 Business Leaders by Florida Trend Magazine.

President Stephenson was selected to represent Florida Poly as a panelist at Ellucian Corporation's North American Sales Meeting, offering insight on higher education's perspective on technology products and services. He was also named to the inaugural Ellucian President's Council by the company's CEO.

In addition, he represented Florida Poly at the Florida Chamber of Commerce's 2025 Innovation Summit, serving on a panel of university presidents discussing innovation in higher education and preparing a future-ready workforce.

During the past 12 months, President Stephenson prioritized meaningful engagement across the University's internal and external communities. These efforts have been instrumental in building relationships to further promote Florida Poly's mission and vision. The meetings emphasized the importance of listening as much as leading, and the opportunities have been important to unite the institution around a common theme and purpose. From July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, his involvement included:
- 21 external speaking or interview engagements
- 114 external partner or potential partner meetings (rarely the same person or business twice)
- 41 Lakeland or campus community events attended
- 23 Strategy Circle meetings with University vice presidents
- 76 one-on-one meetings with University vice presidents
- 7 BOG meetings
- 26 Chancellor calls with other SUS presidents
- 28 one-on-one TEAMS meetings with Board Chair Beth Kigel
- 11 University Board meetings

	2 University Foundation Board meetings 1 international trip to Spain (Polytechnic University of Catalonia; Applus+ IDIADIA; Royal European Academy of Doctors) 2 domestic trips to Washington, D.C., to sign an MOU with Fulbright Hungary at the Hungarian Embassy and for a meeting with U.S. Senator Rick Scott and other members of the University's congressional delegation Florida Poly was recognized nationally, regionally, and statewide by numerous entities for educational quality, student outcomes, and return on taxpayer investment. Those rankings include: - No. 1 public college in the South for the fourth year in a row – U.S. News & World Report - No. 2 best value public college in the South (combines affordability and academic performance) – U.S. News and World Report - No. 8 in the nation for best career outcomes; No. 1 among public universities – WalletHub - No. 1 best value college in Florida – Research.com - No. 1 most popular computer science degree program in Florida – Research.com Florida Poly also launched a University-wide initiative called PhoenixAI, integrating artificial intelligence into teaching, learning, research, and University operations. The institution is working to incorporate AI across all academic programs, supported by its new Faculty Center for Innovative Teaching. Customized PhoenixAI tools help reduce risk and improve effective use of AI in instruction and operations. These tools are now available for faculty and staff and will be opened to students in Fall 2025. ITS will work collaboratively with departments to appropriately integrate AI into automated services and business processes. In Spring 2025, President Stephenson was honored to be invited by faculty to serve as an adjudicator for Florida Poly's Capstone Showcase of year-long, industry-sponsored student projects.

Culture

Cohesive Leadership Focused on Strategy Solidify the senior leadership team	The University successfully onboarded several key leaders during this assessment year, including a new Provost in Spring 2025 and Vice President of Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, and Strategic Communications in summer 2024. In the Advancement Office, a restructuring has brought on a new Chief Development Officer with demonstrated experience in fundraising and external engagement. Additionally, the Patents Office and Grants Development Office were strategically established to strengthen research capacity and external funding efforts.

	A significant amount of reorganization, restructuring, and rightsizing has also taken place across the organizational structure. President Stephenson appointed a new Chief Information Officer and Chief Financial Officer, each selected for their alignment with his vision, leadership style, and administrative priorities. As one University leader noted, "Dr. Stephenson, you now have your 'circle of trust' that will advance the University's mission and vision." Additionally, the President championed the opening of Florida Poly's first Campus Spirit Store to promote school spirit, provide academic resources, generate revenue, and foster community – creating a symbolic and integral part of the University experience. The President also led the planning and execution of Florida Poly Day at the State Capitol during the 2025 Legislative Session. This was the most coordinated advocacy event in institutional history, with participants that included trustees, students, administrators and lobbyists. The event was organized by the newly established Strategic Initiative Department under the leadership of Vice President of Strategic Initiatives Kelli Stargel.
Principle-driven • Foster a culture of respect, transparency, and integrity while promoting proactive leadership	During this assessment year, Guiding Principles were developed to shape decision-making, leadership development, and organizational behavior across all levels. These principles include: • **Excellence and Opportunity**: Leading the pursuit of the highest academic and institutional quality while ensuring access to opportunity for all students. • **Student Focus**: Prioritizing the needs, success, and well-being of every student in every respect. • **Steadfast Integrity:** Demonstrating unwavering dedication to honesty, ethical behavior, and transparency in all institutional practices. • **Community Collaboration:** Fostering mutual support and collective achievement within and beyond the University. • **Forward-Thinking:** Embracing a commitment to growth, adaptability, and future-readiness. These principles are now embedded into the leadership philosophy and will lead to actionable steps that demonstrate tangible evidence of a thriving organization characterized by excellence in every respect.
Vibrant Campus Life • Invest in recreational facilities, social spaces,	The Student Development Center (SDC) is home to campus recreation at Florida Poly, offering a wide variety of activities including intramural sports, fitness, aquatics, outdoor adventure, and University

and extracurricular programs to support student well-being • Explore the feasibility of an expanded collegiate athletics initiative	Teams. During this reporting period, 59% of all students participated in a recreation activity hosted by the SDC. **Total Activity by Location**

Total Activity by Location

SDC Location	Total Participant Count
Arcade	1,303
Gym	22,575
Intramural sports	1,865
Outdoor recreation fields	267
Swimming Pool	286
Total	**26,296**

SDC Location	Unique Users
Arcade	225
Gym	946
Intramural Sports	241
Outdoor recreation fields	176
Swimming Pool	102
Total	**1,690**

The University Teams program, managed by the SDC, includes nine competitive sports clubs that compete against other universities and two additional student groups focused on music and military preparation.

Florida Poly Teams

- Women's Soccer
- Men's Soccer (new in 2024-2025)
- Men's Volleyball (new in 2024-2025)
- Women's Powerlifting
- Swim

	• Archery • Esports • Ultimate Frisbee • Combat Robotics • Navy Nuclear Propulsion Officer Candidate Program (NUPOC) • Band • Chorale/Violet Voices **Notable achievements from the past year** • The men's soccer and volleyball teams had their inaugural season. • Men Soccer earned its first win against Stetson University • Men's Basketball brought home wins against Georgia Tech and Seminole State • Swim sent Reid Johnson to nationals at Arizona State University • Archery brought home four gold, four silver, and one bronze medal at the Sunshine State Games • (NUPOC helped two students become sworn in as officer candidates • Ultimate Frisbee competed at the USA Ultimate Regional Tournament for the first time • Women's Powerlifting earned seven first-place finishes, one second place finish, and one third-place finish at the Collegiate State Championship Competition • The SDC hosted the largest Florida Poly Pi Run with over 180 participants. The annual event raised over $5,000 for campus recreation programs. Florida Poly also began laying the groundwork for the addition of intercollegiate athletics. The University initiated dialogue with the National Association of Collegiate Athletics (NAIA) and the Sun Conference, formed an Athletic Advisory Group, and will soon onboard an athletic director. Full intercollegiate athletic participation is anticipated in Fall 2026, launching with a minimum of six teams.
Data-Informed at All Levels • Streamline organizational processes, reduce bureaucracy, and improve efficiency • Implement the Ellucian	Florida Poly has taken actionable steps this year to improve operational effectiveness through data-informed planning, strategic resource allocation, and the thoughtful use of technology. The Academic and Finance divisions launched a full-scale business process review, while the campus-wide Banner ERP implementation remains on track for full integration in Fall 2026. (It should be noted that while Florida Poly was a full year behind on the Banner ERP integration when the new president arrived on year ago, we are now 9 weeks ahead of schedule.

Banner Student Information System to support administrative functions and enhance the student experience	All departments are assessing size, organizational structure, staffing, tools, and systems to determine their most effective and efficient path forward, ensuring high-quality service delivery to students, internal stakeholders, and external partners. University leadership has been charged to adopt both a growth mindset and an entrepreneurial mindset, emphasizing innovative thinking and proactive use of available resources to achieve outcomes of the highest level. They have been encouraged to think and act in a culture of disruptive innovation without regard to what has been and instead think in terms of what can be. The Informational Technology Services division embraced this call to action by achieving over $2M in savings in one year through staffing adjustments, contract renegotiations, and improved internal processes. Similar efficiencies were realized within the Business/Finance Office and Development Office where multiple roles were consolidated to maximize performance with fewer personnel. This intentional, data-informed approach lays the foundation for greater institutional agility, accountability, and sustained excellence.
Growth	
Enrollment: • Invest in recruitment operations • Reset Florida Poly's marketing and branding strategy by leveraging analytics to increase high-quality applicants	Florida Poly continues to make bold strides in strategic enrollment management and institutional visibility. Following a comprehensive review, it became clear that the existing admissions process was a failed system. In response, the University launched a new Strategic Enrollment Management Plan focused on elevating marketing and communications initiatives to drive performance across key metrics. As a result, media exposure continued to rise in FY2024-25, even following a remarkable 34% surge the previous year that was driven by high-profile events such as Florida Poly's 10-year anniversary and the presidential search. Despite the challenge of maintaining that heightened visibility, the Strategic Communications team delivered a 1.7% increase in media exposure, surpassing 6,740 media mentions. Much of this continued growth stemmed from strategic promotion of the University's research and community collaborations. Some of the key stories the media covered include: • Dr. Rawa Adla's I-4 transportation research • Dr. Karim Elish's work in malware detection • Dr. Chris Kelley's research in Parkinson's diagnosis • Dr. Jun Kim's water research in partnership with the City of Winter Haven

	- Student-engineered holster developed for the Lakeland Police Department - Phoenix solar car development and Grand Prix Race in Bowling Green, Kentucky - Dr. Alex Murphy and Dr. Apurva Patel's leadership in student research/development with NASA The team consistently maximized these opportunities, bringing reporters to campus and elevating Florida Poly's profile. To support this momentum, the University created a new role: Presidential Communications Manager. This position supports the active pace of the President's engagement efforts and ensures there is alignment between presidential messaging, community engagement, advocacy, and external relations. This position has proven instrumental in advancing our mission and amplifying our institutional voice. Recruiting operations have been bolstered through the onboarding of a Digital Marketing Specialist, hired to strengthen engagement with prospective students across digital and social media platforms. The results speak for themselves. Fall 2025 is projected to mark the largest incoming class in University history, with a 200% increase in graduate student enrollment.
Faculty Enhance the faculty recruitment program by offering competitive salaries and compensation packages	In the past year, the University welcomed more than 25 new faculty members across a range of disciplines including applied mathematics, business analytics, chemistry, civil engineering, computer science, cybersecurity engineering, data science, electrical engineering, English, industrial engineering, mechanical engineering, and physics. While this represents a stellar year for faculty recruitment, sustaining momentum will require continued attention to competitive compensation and robust benefits packages, along with a spirited culture of respect and academic excellence.
Degree Programs Develop a multi-year plan to attract adult learners and career professionals. The plan is to be based on institutional mission and informed by market-demand graduate degree programs and expanding modalities for existing programs.	Florida Poly engaged a national academic market research firm to evaluate existing degree programs and provide comparative data on regional and national trends. The study also identified student demand for several potential programs and majors. The University obtained SACSCOC approval to offer academic programs fully online. The M.S. in Engineering Management will launch as the first 100% online program in Fall 2025. Guided by market research data and aligned with the University's STEM-focused mission, program expansion efforts are focused on strengthening workforce alignment and economic value to the state.

• Balance the University's program portfolio by adding foundational and innovative science programs that lead to high-demand, high-wage STEM careers, especially in the medical and health science sectors.	Florida Poly will continue monitoring labor markets for trends and aligning future degree programs with the Board of Governors' Programs of Strategic Emphasis, prioritizing fields that lead to high-wage, high-demand careers.
	
	Additional efforts underway include:
	• Finalizing a new program priority list Fall 2025, followed by the development of appropriate pre-proposals for the Board of Governors and curricular development to implement new degrees and majors over the next five years.
	• Introducing new certifications and academic recovery pathways in Business Analytics, Applied Science, and Physics.
	• Actively developing new degree programs in:
	    o Aerospace and Space Systems
	    o Biomedical Engineering
	    o Chemical Engineering
	    o Construction Technology and Materials
	    o Materials Science
	    o Themed-Entertainment Engineering

Foundation
• Grow the University Foundation's assets to:
    o Operationally support the institution
    o Provide scholarship dollars to students
    o Reduce the impact of the DSO's personnel and operational costs on Florida Poly's educational and general (E&G) operating budget
	An external consultant from Sam Houston State University in Texas conducted an independent review of the operational effectiveness and efficiencies within the Development Office. A major finding was the need to set a realistic and ambitious annual fundraising goal in the $3M-$5M range. In response, the University launched a national search for a highly qualified leader with demonstrated fundraising experience to champion Florida Poly's efforts. That individual joined the Florida Poly team on Aug. 1 and will lead a comprehensive reset of the Development Office's strategy, operations, and performance expectations. Organizational changes are expected, including the addition of a position dedicated to planned giving and estate planning. A primary focus will be to enhance the ROI in development personnel and generate more unrestricted dollars for the University.
	
	In FY25, the Development Office raised $1,002,167 in grants and donations. This amount is far below the potential identified by the consulting study. This outcome is both disappointing and concerning. However, with a new Chief Development Officer in place, there is a renewed sense of focus, accountability, and measurable progress toward growing the endowment for generating more restricted, unrestricted, and planned/estate gifts.

	President Stephenson spearheaded the revision of the Foundation's bylaws and the memorandum of understanding between the Foundation and the University, enhancing effectiveness and efficiency while fostering a strong, mutually beneficial partnership between the two organizations. Additionally, the working relationship between the Development Office and University personnel has been reestablished to ensure improved collaboration and shared support services, including IT, finance, administrative support, and marketing and strategic communications. In lieu of a formal presidential inauguration, President Stephenson chose to redirect its estimated $100,000 cost toward establishing and Emergency Scholarship Fund. The scholarship is administered by the University's financial aid office, and to date, 14 students have received a total of $6,687.90 from this fund. Also, the Stephenson Family established a student scholarship program with an initial installment of $25,000. The purpose of this fund is to support students with financial need and who demonstrate the ability to perform a leadership role within the University community.

SUMMARY:

Upon my arrival to Florida Poly in Summer 2024, I integrated a business model from *The Four Disciplines of Execution* by Steven Covey to guide our work environment. Embracing this philosophical approach to management and measurement of our success has kept us focused on our priorities, especially those outlined in our 25|30 Strategic Plan. Most important within this model is the concept of "A Cadence of Accountability", which we have used throughout the organization to monitor progress, celebrate successes, retool our processes, and operate within a framework of continuous improvement. This business model has indeed united our efforts in fulfilling the mission and vision of Florida Poly and will continue to be vital as we grow in every dimension.

This year has been marked by significant activity, strategic decision-making, and meaningful action. While I cannot confidently assert that I have exceeded all my expectations or the expectations of the Board of Trustees, there are clear and encouraging indicators of positive momentum across the University.

Notably, there has been a palpable shift in the campus culture, with faculty, staff, and students demonstrating a renewed sense of energy and commitment to our shared mission. This cultural transformation is reflected in increased accountability across departments and a strengthened sense of institutional pride. Many of our internal measures (outside of PBF and the SUS Accountability Report) have shown noticeable improvement over the past year, while others have remained stable.

We have also seen our global partnerships expand, and despite leaner staffing in some departments, our operational efficiency has improved. These advancements point to a University that is headed in the right direction, building a stronger and more focused foundation for the future.

It continues to be both a privilege and an honor to serve as President of Florida Polytechnic University. The past year has oftentimes presented a rather steep learning curve for me, but I have approached each challenge with enthusiasm and a genuine desire to deepen my understanding of the complexities of higher education administration. Conversely, I've committed myself to maintaining open lines of communication and a collaborative leadership style to ensure a smooth transition between my presidency and that of my predecessor.

Looking ahead, I am confident my second year as president holds even greater promise. With a new and energized senior leadership team working collaboratively across all departments, I am optimistic we will achieve unprecedented success in FY26. We will continue advancing the mission and vision of Florida Poly with strength, clarity, and impact, under the guidance and propulsion of our 25|30 Strategic Plan.

Thank you for the honor of serving with you!

Devin Stephenson

The Reset, Restructure, and Refinement of the Administration and Finance Division during Dr. Stephenson's First Year (2024-2025)

An ongoing, comprehensive review of all processes and practices within the Division of Administration and Finance is underway following the direction of the President and VP/Chief Financial Officer (Dr. Tanner McKnight). This document highlights the primary findings, recommendations, improvements, and statuses of current projects and successes that have emerged from these efforts. The goals of this process are to improve the division's processing times, eliminate wasteful spending, ensure procedural compliance with statute and policy, and to maximize efficiencies in all systematic processes within the division.

Fiscal Improvements

- Implemented a zero-based budgeting model for FY26 that required each department budget manager to present annual requests to the Presidential budget committee.
    - Budgeting recurring annual operating expenses parallel with recurring revenues. Utilizing nonrecurring revenue sources to fund nonrecurring projects/expenses.
    - Reduced budget waste by 10-15% and has freed up financial resources to be applied toward value-adding projects.
- Created new financial reports for both the University and Foundation (fiscal transparency).
- Opted to forego President's inauguration ceremony to utilize the funds to directly meet students' needs ($150,000) through emergency grants/scholarships.
- Opened a campus spirit store (auxiliary revenue generator and spreads brand awareness)
    - Sales goal of $125,000 for FY25-26; Currently at $25,000 as of August 15
- Monthly financial reports are now being created and shared with President's Strategy Circle (fiscal transparency).
- Bringing DOGE mentality to all areas of Administration and Finance
    - Added required "benefit to the university" criteria in purchasing requisition process to cut waste and track efficiencies (DOGE).

- - Turning on previously unused **Workday** automation functions (such as expense report reminders) to reduce personnel time spent on manual tasks.
- Reviewing, scoring, and revising (as needed) all business processes from start to finish to pinpoint ways to increase processing speed, and eliminate unnecessary documentation and layers of inter-departmental approval that will reduce wasteful spending.
- Reducing the number of p-card holders in both the University and Foundation
  - P-cards allow cardholders to make purchases first, then submit receipt documentation for approval after. Current process does not hold cardholders responsible for wasteful or unallowable spending. Reducing the number of cardholders reduces the risk of wasteful spending.
  - Part of the "maverick spend" $800,000-$1 million expense reduction mentioned below under "Physical Improvements."
- Increased revenue in FY2025-2026 by $13 million, or 13% relative to the FY2024-2025 budget.
- Expanding print/copy services options to reduce amount of print services currently being outsourced.
  - Also starting the process to open a passport office on campus as a supplemental revenue generator; other larger SUS institutions are making $100,000+ off passport offices from community sales. Our goal is to add $10,000 in net value while also offering a service to students, employees, and the community.

Physical Improvements

- Started construction on new Campus Control Center (Operations and University Safety).
- Conducted Golf cart utilization study to reduce the number of golf carts and more effective check-out system.
- Helped identify countless unused and underutilized assets on the books
- Currently implementing a new system to allow departments to view and request surplus assets currently in storage – maximizing asset utilization (i.e., computers, monitors, golf carts, vehicles, etc.)
- Procurement Director predicts current "maverick spend" (waste) to be approximately $800,000-$1 million annually. This new system for utilizing surplus assets and requiring respective operational departments will eliminate this waste

installation).

- Successful completion of the Gary C. Wendt Engineering building in budget.
- Expanded parking Lot 6 to meet increasing demand.
- Obtained donation of new trailer for solar car team through corporate partnership relations ($15,000 value).
- Started construction on a state-of-the-art eSports arena.

Personnel Improvements

- CFO now requires weekly/biweekly check-ins with all direct reports and is holding regular group meetings with the Administration and Finance division staff.
- New financial philosophy eliminates the CFO from being the sole financial decision maker on the leadership team.
  - All strategic and financial decisions are being made collectively as a group during President's Strategy Circle meeting.
  - Eliminated the previous CFO's Discretionary Fund (reserves "parked" for CFO's access only).
- Overhauled personnel structure to increase automation and streamline efficiencies.
  - Reduced IT staff from 41 to 28 and added hands-on skills training to in-source the amount of external contracting work related to IT infrastructure
    - More in-house technical labor reduces contract expenses and has netted savings from reduced third-party contracting (splicing, equipment installation, troubleshooting, etc.)
    - Reduced the number of network routers on campus which led to increased connectivity speeds due to the elimination of "dueling routers". This is direct savings on equipment costs as well.
    - Savings of $1 million+
  - Eliminated 3 unneeded positions in Auxiliary Services, 1 position in Procurement, and 1 position in Financial Services and increased part-time student labor in Auxiliary Services for net annual savings of $372,500.
- Bringing DOGE mentality to all areas of Administration and Finance
  - Redesigning all organizational structures based on current institutional needs – not creating positions based on the people we currently have.

- New Physical Plant org chart to create more hands-on laborer positions and fewer administrative roles:
  - Expect to save $50,000 in outsourced contract labor initially; this amount will grow as the University expands
- New Finance/Accounting org chart to combine positions, reduce the total number of positions needed, create dual controls, and cross-train across the department
- New Auxiliary Services org chart to reduce full-time staffing and backfill with skilled student labor
- Eliminated remote work and implemented flexible work schedule options to maximize employee productivity.
  - This effort has helped us identify multiple unnecessary positions and underperforming employees.
- Established a centralized personnel approval process (Personnel Action Form) that requires multiple approvals before a new position can be posted or filled (i.e., accounting, budget, division VP, and President)
  - This new process forces the institution to check the budget before personnel decisions are made and requires the President to be the final approver on all personnel matters.
- Reworked campus police schedules to allow the university to operate more efficiently with fewer officers – net savings to the University.
  - This allowed the department to reduce the number of police cruisers, therefore reducing the amount spent on vehicle maintenance
  - Currently adding speed tables to Polytechnic Circle, a one-time capital investment, that will reduce the number of officers needed on speed/traffic enforcement (long-term net savings via personnel reduction)
  - Net savings are predicted to be $150,000 annually.